

# Proceedings of



## Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration

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Marriott at the  
World Trade Center  
New York, New York  
June 7-11, 1998

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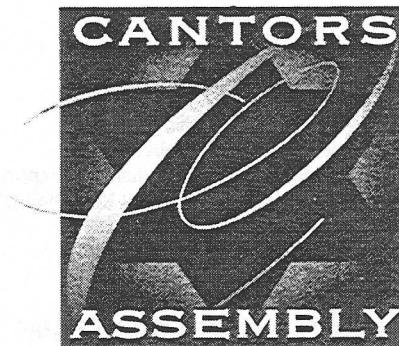
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\* Deceased

**Proceedings of  
The Cantors Assembly  
Jubilee Celebration**



**June 7-11, 1998  
Marriott at the World Trade Center  
New York, New York**

**Edited by  
Joseph A. Levine**

**Cantors Assembly  
Jewish Theological Seminary  
3080 Broadway, New York, NY 10027-4649**



## JUBILEE HISTORICAL CELEBRATION

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## CONTENTS

<b>Convention Program</b> .....	5
<b>Hazzan Leib Glantz – A Retrospective</b>	
<i>Hazzan</i> Solomon Mendelson.....	14
Ezra Glantz.....	14
Akiva Zimmerman.....	18
<b>The Case of <i>Unetaneh Tokef</i></b>	
<i>Hazzan</i> Simon Gewirtz.....	23
Professor Neil Gillman.....	23
<b>Talmudic Debate about Hallel</b>	
<i>Hazzan</i> Jack Chomsky.....	35
Professor Judith Hauptman.....	35
<b>The Midrash of the Death of Moses</b>	
<i>Hazzan</i> Jeremy Lipton.....	50
Rabbi Alan Kensky.....	50
<b>Hadash Yamenu KeKedem – An Historical Perspective</b>	
<i>Hazzan</i> Saul Hammerman.....	64
<i>Hazzan</i> Charles Bloch.....	65
<i>Hazzan</i> Isaac Goodfriend.....	67
<i>Hazzan</i> Abraham Salkov.....	69
<i>Hazzan</i> Abraham Shapiro.....	71
<b>If These Walls Could Sing</b>	
Amy Waterman.....	74
<i>Hazzan</i> Kurt Silberman.....	75
Dr. Ismar Schorsch.....	76
Jubilee Honorees.....	81
<b>Synagogue 2000 – How Will It Affect Us?</b>	
<i>Hazzan</i> Erica Lippitz.....	83
Adina Hamik.....	85
<i>Hazzan</i> Ramon Tasat.....	89
<b>Moshe Ganchoff Remembered</b>	
<i>Hazzan</i> Robert Kieval.....	96
<i>Hazzan</i> Jacob Ben Zion Mendelson.....	98
Noah Schall.....	98
Barry Serota.....	100

**Envisioning the Future of the Cantorate**

<i>Hazzan</i> Sheldon Levin.....	104
<i>Hazzan</i> Scott Sokol.....	105
<i>Hazzan</i> Laurie Rimland-Bonn.....	106
<i>Hazzan</i> James Gloth.....	108
<i>Hazzan</i> Larry Goller.....	110

**The *Hazzan* and Jewish Pastoral Care**

<i>Hazzan</i> Ed Kulp.....	118
<i>Hazzan</i> Alan Edwards.....	118

**Music and Movement**

<i>Hazzan</i> Joseph Gole.....	126
Judith Greenfield.....	126

**Programming for Adults**

<i>Hazzan</i> Jeffrey Myers.....	134
<i>Hazzan</i> Jeffrey Shiovitz.....	135

**51<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting**

Regional Reports.....	145
Installation of Officers.....	151
Response of Newly Elected Executive Vice President.....	153
Memorial to Newly Departed Colleagues.....	157
Memorial Roll of All Departed Colleagues.....	160



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*Our exhibitors can be found throughout the convention  
in the Liberty Room.*

## SUNDAY, JUNE 7

9:00 A.M.

**Registration-Hospitality (Open throughout most of the day)**

**Grand Ballroom Foyer**

Take in the sites of Lower Manhattan at your leisure.

12:00 Noon

Buses will loop between the hotel and Central Park every 30 minutes, beginning at noon. Throughout the convention, buses will load and depart on Liberty Street.

1:00-5:00 P.M.

**Central Park Concert - Jubilee Celebration**

**Co-Sponsor: Consulate General of The State of Israel in New York**

**Honoring the State of Israel - At the East Meadow**

**(Enter at 97th Street and Fifth Avenue)**

**Chairpersons: Hazzanim Chayim Frenkel and Jeffrey Myers**

**Guest Producer: Cynthia Tivers**

World renowned Israeli recording artists and combined children's choirs with over 1,000 children from the New York area - together with Cantors from the Tri-State Region of the Cantors Assembly - join together in saluting the 50th Anniversary of the State of Israel. Performers include Hazzanim Sol Zim and David Feuer, along with Yehoram Gaon, Yaffa Yarkoni, Mike Burstyn, Esta, and Pete Seeger.

**Presentation of Yuval Award to Mr. Michael Sitrick.**

**Presentation to Mr. Henry Stern, Commissioner of Parks  
and Recreation.**

7:15 PM

מנחה

**Harvest Room**

**הazzan בעל תפילה Hazzan Simon Kandler**

**Hazzan Leib Glantz - A Retrospective**

**Chairperson: Hazzan Solomon Mendelson**

An informative historical tribute on the 100th anniversary of the birth of Leib Glantz. This session will include memories and reflections by Akiva Zimmerman, Hazzan Sidney Dworkin and Leib's son, Jerry Glantz.

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

---

8:30 PM

Concert **מעריב** in the style of Leib Glantz  
Hazzan Abraham Lubin

Harvest Room

9:45 PM

Promenade Concert  
Chairperson: Hazzan Don Croll, Host  
A Cantors Assembly tradition - join with some of the greatest voices of all time as they perform impromptu into the wee small hours of the night to everyone's delight and enjoyment.

### MONDAY, JUNE 8

7:00 AM

Chair: Hazzan Neil Schwartz  
Hazzan Judith Naimark

Merchants Exchange Room

Traditional

Hazzan Morris Semigran  
Hazzan Robert Lieberman

River Suite Room

9:00 AM

Concurrent Talmud Text Study Sessions

Chair: Hazzan Shimon Gewirtz

East River Room

Professor Neil Gillman

Reading the Liturgy Through the Spectacles of Theology:  
The Case of *Untaneh Tokef*

Chair: Hazzan Jack Chomsky

Hudson River Room

Professor Judith Hauptman

Talmudic Debate About *Hallel*

Chair: Hazzan Jeremy Lipton

New York Harbor Room

Rabbi Alan Kensky

Encounter with Mortality: The Midrash of the Death of Moses

10:30 AM

Hadesh Yamenu K'kedem  
(Renew Our Days as of Old)  
An Historical Retrospective

River Suite Room

Chairperson: Hazzan Saul Hammerman



**Participants: Hazzanim Charles Bloch, Isaac Goodfriend,  
Abraham Salkov, Abraham Shapiro**

The personalities behind the Cantorate in America and 50 years of the Cantors Assembly. The stories, myths and legends presented by a panel of senior Hazzanim. Recall the personalities that have made the Cantorate and the Cantors Assembly rich, vibrant and significant. This is an opportunity to hear the untold "stories" that are part of our great legacy.

**12:45 PM**

**Buses Depart for Eldridge Street Synagogue**

**1:45 PM**

**If These Walls Could Sing**

**Eldridge Street Synagogue**

**Chairperson: Hazzan Kurt Silbermann**

**Participants: Dr. Ismar Schorsch and Hazzan Sidney Rabinowitz**

The Chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary will present the first annual Hazzan Samuel Rosenbaum Memorial Lecture. The Minha service will be conducted by one of our distinguished members. In addition, recognition will be given to colleagues with 40 years or more of service in the Cantorate.

**3:30 - 6:00 PM**

**Leisure Time and Dinner**

**6:00 PM**

**מעריב**

**בעל תפלת Hazzan Scott Buckner**

**River Suite Room**

**6:45 PM**

**Buses Depart for Carnegie Hall**

**8:00 PM**

**Voices of The Soul**

**Carnegie Hall**

**Chairpersons: Hazzanim Joseph Gole and Nathan Lam**

**Guest Narrator: Martin Bookspan**

**Guest Producer: Lynn Roth**

A recital concert featuring some of the world's greatest cantors in an historic, never to be forgotten performance, celebrating the greatest and most expressive art form of the Jewish people. Hazzanut is the voice of the Cantor reflecting the yearnings of our soul. Performers will include Hazzanim Aaron Bensoussan, Rebecca Carmi, Louis

**Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998** 

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Danto, Farid Dardashti, Chayim Frenkel, Raphael Frieder, Joseph Gole, Faith S. Gurney, Dov Keren, Nathan Lam, David Lefkowitz, Melvin Luterman, Benjamin Maissner, Fredda R. Mendelson, Jacob Ben Zion Mendelson, Alberto Mizrahi, Chaim Najman, Howard Nevison, David Propis, Henry Rosenblum, Steven Stoehr and Sol Zim. Orchestra and chorus conducted by Matthew Lazar.

**Buses Return to Hotel Following Concert**

**11:30 PM**

**Promenade Concert**

**Harvest Room**

**Hazzan Herschel Fox, Host**

**TUESDAY, JUNE 9**

**7:00 AM**

**שחרית**

**Harvest Room**

**בעל תפלה**

**Hazzan Joel Licherman**

**8:15 AM**

**Buses Depart for Ellis Island Ferry**

**You may also opt to take a short cab ride or walk to the Ferry.**

**9:00 AM**

**Ferry Departs for Ellis Island**

**10:30 AM**

**Songs of the Immigrant Experience**

**Ellis Island**

**Chairperson: Hazzan Steven Stoehr**

**Guest Producer: Cynthia Tivers**

A retrospective of our diverse musical traditions tracing to their countries of origin. Included in the program will also be a salute to the Statue of Liberty and a memorial to the six million who were unable to emigrate to the United States. Participants include Hazzanim Shabtai Ackerman, Marla Barugel, Henrique Ozur-Bass, Moshe Bear, Aaron Bensoussan, Don Croll, Hamid Dardashti, Howard Glantz, Isaac Goodfriend, Erno Grosz, Alberto Mizrahi, Misha Pisman, Kurt Silbermann, Sam Weiss, Itzhak Zhrebker.

**1:20 PM**

**Buses Return to Hotel**



**1:45 PM**

**Concurrent Educational Sessions**

**A. Synagogue 2,000 - How will it affect us?** Trader Room

Chair: Hazzan Erica Lippitz

Participants: Adina Hamik, Hazzan Ramon Tasat

**B. Moshe Ganchoff Remembered** Harvest Room

Presentors: Hazzanim Robert Kieval (Chair),

Jacob Ben Zion Mendelson, Noah Schall and

Mr. Barry Serota

**3:00 PM**

**Educational Sessions Continued**

**A. Envisioning the Future of the Cantorate** Trader Room

Chair: Hazzan Sheldon Levin

Participants: Hazzanim James Gloth, Larry Goller,  
Laurie Rimland Bonn, Scott Sokol

**B. The Hazzan-Jewish Pastoral Care:** Dow Room

What's the Relationship?

Chair: Hazzan Ed Kulp

Presentor: Hazzan Alan Edwards

**C. Music and Movement** Commodity Room

Chair: Hazzan Joseph Gole

Presentor: Judith Greenfeld

**D. Programming for Adults** Stock Room

Participants: Hazzanim Jeffrey Myers and Jeffrey Shiovitz

**4:00 - 6:00 PM**

**Leisure Time and Dinner**

**6:00 PM**

**Buses Depart for Congregation Emanu-El of the City of New York**  
1 E. 65th Street

**6:45 PM**

**Optional Tour of the Herbert and Eileen Bernard Museum at**  
**Congregation Emanu-El of the City of New York.**

**Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998** 

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מנחה

**Greenwald Chapel**

בעלת תפלה **Hazzan Janet Krupnick**

מעריב

בעלת תפלה **Hazzan Josee Wolff**

**8:00 PM**

**Concert at Congregation Emanu-El of the City of New York.**

**Chairpersons: Hazzanim Nathan Lam, Howard Nevison**

**and David Tilman**

A concert saluting New York's composers of Jewish music, featuring members of the Cantors Assembly and Chorus, conducted by Hazzan David Tilman. Participants include: Hazzanim David Barash, Marla Barugel, Isaac Goodfriend, Saul Hammerman, Lorna Wallach Kalet, Kimberly L. Komrad, Thom King, Sheldon Levin, Jeremy Lipton, Howard Nevison, Martha Novick, Charles Osborne, Elliot Portner, Robert Scherr, Ralph Schlossberg, Morton Shames, Murray Simon, Robert Solomon, Stephen Texon, Paula Victor, Eliot Vogel and Cory Winter.

**Buses Return to Hotel Following Concert**

**11:30 PM**

**Promenade Concert**

**Harvest Room**

**Hazzan Herschel Fox, Host**

**11:30 PM**

**Cantors Institute Alumni**

**Broadway Suite**

**Social Hour/Meeting (CIAA)**

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10**

**7:00 AM**

**שחרית**

**Harvest Room**

**בעל תפלה Hazzan Larry Vieder**

**9:00 AM**

**New Synagogue Music for the Next Century**

**Harvest Room**

**Chair: Hazzan Scott Sokol**

**Hazzan Jo Ann Rice, Conductor**

Exciting new compositions and music composed by the finest musicians of our time, including works commissioned by the Cantors Assembly especially for this Convention. Designed to meet the challenges of today's congregations, this material has been



composed and conceived with sensitivity to our rich heritage of Nusah and our timeless tradition, with emphasis on material for special occasions. New publications from Tara and Transcontinental Publications and Oxford Press will also be presented. The ensemble will be comprised of students from the H.L. Miller Cantorial School and guest Hazzanim.

**10:30 AM**

**The Art of the Traditional Hazzan and Choir** Harvest Room

**Chair: Hazzan Pinchas Spiro**

**Participants: Hazzan Naphtali Hershtik (Jerusalem, Israel)  
and the Choir of the Great Synagogue of Jerusalem  
under the direction of Eli Jaffe**

**1:15 PM**

**51st Annual Meeting** Grand Ballroom - Salon 3

**(Closed session - members and spouses only)**

**Presiding: Hazzan Henry Rosenblum, President**

**Agenda:**

**Induction of New Members: Hazzan Kurt Silbermann**

**Presentation of Commissions: Hazzan Abraham Shapiro**

**Report of the Nominations Committee: Hazzan Abraham Lubin**

**Installation of Officers: Hazzan Morton Shames, Installing Officer**

**Report of Executive Vice President Search Committee:**

**Hazzan Henry Rosenblum**

**Response of Newly Elected Executive Vice President**

**Treasurer's Report: Hazzan Joseph Gole**

**Memorial to Departed Colleagues**

**הספד Hazzan Richard Wolberg**

**הזכרה Hazzan Emanuel Perlman**

**מנחה**

**בעל תפילה Hazzan Gregory Yaroslav**

*Non-members are encouraged to visit the sites of lower Manhattan including the Heritage Museum.*

**Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998** 

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**4:15 PM**

**Buses Depart for Park Avenue Synagogue**

**50 E. 87th Street**

**5:00 PM**

**Formal Cocktail Hour and Reception at Park Avenue Synagogue.**

*(By Prepaid Reservation Only)*

Delegates may view an exhibit on the birth of the Cantors Assembly in the main lobby and tour the synagogue.

**6:30 PM**

**Concert** *מעריב*

**Main Sanctuary**

*(recorded for broadcast on ABC TV)*

**Chair: Hazzan David Lefkowitz**

Participants include Hazzanim Nancy Abramson, Ira Bigeleisen, Joel Caplan, Israel Goldstein, Larry Goller, Linda Kates, Arthur Katlin, Jerome Kopmar, Paul Kowarsky, Mark Kula, Janet Krupnick, David Lefkowitz, Erica Lippitz, Judith Naimark, Alisa Pomerantz-Boro, Bruce Ruben, Lorna Wallach Kalet, Rabbi David Lincoln, Park Avenue Synagogue Choir, Park Avenue Synagogue Youth Ensemble and Neil Robinson, Organist.

**Remarks: Hazzan Stephen J. Stein**

**8:15 PM**

**Formal Banquet Dinner**

**Park Avenue Synagogue Ballroom**

**Chair: Hazzan Saul Hammerman**

**Co-Chair: Hazzan Stephen J. Stein**

**Plaque Presentations to Newly Completed Cantors Assembly**

**Scholarships, Awards and Funds:**

**Hazzan Harold Lerner Scholarship Fund**

**Richard W. Briskin Cantor-in-Residence Award**

**Presentation of Yuval Award to: Judge Avern Cohn**

**Presentation of Kavod Award to: Rabbi Morton Leifman**

**Presentation of Kavod Award to: Hazzan Abraham Shapiro**

**Presentation to Past Presidents: Hazzan Henry Rosenblum**

**"Those Are the Days" - a video retrospective of the first 50 years of the Cantors Assembly, produced by Hazzan Linda Kates.**



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הבה נשיר Hazzan Stephen Freedman  
ברכת המזון Hazzan Lance Tapper

**Buses Return to Hotel Following Banquet**

**11:30 PM**

Promenade Concert  
Hazzan Herschel Fox, Host

Harvest Room

**THURSDAY, JUNE 11**

**7:00 AM**

שחרית

Harvest Room

בעל חפלה Hazzan Bruce Braun  
בעל קריאה Hazzan Carol Chesler

**10:00 AM**

Executive Council Meeting

Harvest Room

**11:00 AM**

**Tour of Manhattan (Optional)**

Optional tour to be arranged by Ayelet Tours of some of the spectacular sights of Manhattan including Lincoln Center, The Museum of Natural History, Museum of Modern Art, Empire State Building, Rockefeller Center.

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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### **Hazzan Leib Glantz - A Retrospective**

**Ezra Glantz**

**Akiva Zimmermann**

**Chair: Hazzan Solomon Mendelson**

#### *Hazzan Solomon Mendelson:*

Dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen. Happily, the opening session of our Jubilee Convention converges on three major themes, all of them bound up one with another. First, it is of course the 50th birthday of our beloved State of Israel. Secondly, it is the 50th birthday of our Cantors Assembly. And the third part of this *brachah hameshuleshet* is the commemoration, almost to the day, of the 100th birthday of the *hazan hahazzanim* or as others have put it, *hazzan hador*, the great Leib Glantz, *ne'im zmirot yisrael*.

Now as Chairman it is not my function to go into an analysis of the elements that made Leib Glantz so great. That will be left to our distinguished panelists. I do, however, want to make two short observations. First, that I sang for a short while as a young boy in Reuven Kazimirsky's choir, not far from here on the Lower East Side. At least that's where we rehearsed. On this particular occasion the services were held at Grossinger's during Pesach, and the Hazzan was Leib Glantz. I cannot say that I truly understood at the time what was taking place, except it was apparent that there was magic in the air.

My friend Joseph Levine, who's here with his dear wife Doris, remarked just the other day how appropriate it was that 50 years ago when the State of Israel was born, Leib Glantz began to declaim with the *havarah sephardit*. Some say that it began when he made *aliyah* in 1954, but we won't quibble, since he was bringing coals to Newcastle. But even to this day there are *hazzanim* in Israel who *daven* in Ashkenazic style. And, in an article that Glantz published while at Los Angeles' Sinai Temple in the early 1940s, he spoke not just about proclaiming yourself a Zionist, but living like one. Making *aliyah* was only one manifestation of his Zionist commitment.

At this time it is my pleasure to call upon one of the sons of Leib Glantz, Ezra, of Boca Raton and Tel Aviv. I also want to acknowledge the presence of his brother Kalman who is here from Cambridge, Massachusetts. I don't see Ezra's daughter Shan; I met her this afternoon and she's supposed to be here. If you see a strikingly pretty girl walk in these portals, it's probably her. At any rate, it's my great pleasure to call upon Ezra Glantz, son of Leib Glantz.

#### *Ezra Glantz:*

Good evening. On behalf of my family, my wife Taliah, my brother Dr. Kalman Glantz, my daughter and son, I would like to thank the Cantors Assembly and Akivah Zimmermann for making this evening possible. It's a hundred years since my father's birth, and I would like to share something with you. Just a few moments before my father died, I was walking to the synagogue with him. He told me, "you know, the truth is that people yet don't understand my music and what I'm trying to do in the *tefillah*, but in 20 or 30 or maybe



40 years, they will." And I also have been meeting lately all sorts of young adults - when I say young, I mean 20, 30 years old - people who were born after my father died, and they're telling me that I don't know who Leib Glantz was! That's the greatest *nachas* that a son could have from his father.

I was asked to try and give an impression of who my father was. To do so properly I'm going to intersperse excerpts from a lecture that my brother, Dr Kalman Glantz, gave a couple of years ago in Hartford, Connecticut. I think they're very relevant and, without quoting each time, I credit my brother Kalman up front for much of what follows.

There are three words that have to be used in describing Leib Glantz: intensity, passion and conviction. These three words apply to all aspects of his public and professional life. The intensity and passion were manifest in his *daven' n*, as anyone can hear. What isn't so obvious is that behind what he was singing and doing lay very intensely held convictions. To understand this, one has to know that there were three aspects to his career: the cantorate, politics and research. His cantorial career you already know about. His politics were the politics of labor Zionism. His research involved the search for origins of synagogue music. On all these subjects he had fiercely held views.

My father first davened a service at the age of 4 at the Talner synagogue in Kiev, where his father, grandfather, great-grandfather and great-great-grandfather had been cantors. He first started touring in Russia and the Ukraine at the age of 8. So he was a cantor from way back. Exactly when he became a Labor Zionist I don't know, but by college age - 1917-18 - he was definitely active in the party in Kiev. How much conflict this created within his family I haven't been able to determine, but you will remember that most of the early support for Zionism did not come from the synagogues. My father left the Ukraine permanently for Kishinev in 1920 and immediately became a member of *Tze'irei Tziyon*, his faction of the Labor Zionist movement. He emigrated to America in 1926, and almost immediately became a member of the Cntral Committee in New York where he befriended Chaim Greenberg, the leader of Labor Zionism in America. As far as I know, the anti-religious character of the Labor Zionist movement didn't bother my father. For him, Zionism and Judaism were one. Having a state, **that** was Judaism. To be a Jew was to want a state. He was religious, and if other Zionists weren't observant, that could be overlooked.

The third aspect of his career was research into the origins of synagogue music. This was a subject on which he had especially strong convictions. He was extremely concerned, upset would be more accurate, about the fact that Western themes and scales - major, minor - had crept into synagogue music. In his opinion, the original *nusach* of the prayers was being obscured by the music of the various peoples among whom the Jews had lived. This he saw as a great tragedy. My father thought it would be possible through a process of comparison and elimination to reconstruct the pure music of the Jews, perhaps even the music of the Second Temple, who knows?

That introduced an almost moral dimension into the music. He wasn't just trying to create something beautiful or expressive or meaningful, he was trying to get it right. And if there is a right way, there is also a wrong way, obviously. My father's deep-seated

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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convictions made him intolerant of contemporary cantors. Let's remember who these contemporaries were. We now think of them as cantors of the Golden Age during the 1920's and 1930's. But this is strictly an American perspective. *Hazzanut* is a European art. The cantors we know are the ones who made it to America and got recording contracts. For the most part, my father felt that these cantors did not represent the best in *Hazzanut*. They had marvelous voices, but many of them were not Hebrewscholars, didn't really understand the deeper meaning of the text, sang every piece the same way -- as a lament -- no matter what the words meant. And worse, some of them were concerned primarily with their popularity, and openly introduced Western popular and operatic themes into the synagogue. This he saw as a crime against the Jewish people.

So who did he like? He thought David Roitman had a few authentic pieces. Pinchik's *Rozo Deshabbos* he admired greatly; most mavens agree it is Pinchik's most Glantz-like piece. Here and there he had a good word for this composition or that, but the only cantors I remember him talking about with real admiration were Nisi Belzer and Pini Minkowsky, and neither one was ever recorded as far as we know.

Why were Glantz's admirers so fanatical and so exclusive? In my opinion, it was because Glantz provided them with a unique experience, something that was both musically and intellectually authentic. At his best Glantz entered a trance-like state, a state of mystical union whenever he began to pray. In this state, he felt he was speaking directly to God. He literally became the *shelia'ch tsibbur*, the messenger of the people. His voice would ring out with amazing resonance and freedom. But sound was not his concern. What was important to him was the interpretation of the text, and for those who understood Hebrew, his interpretations were startling. They gave new meaning to words that people had been repeating, sometimes mechanically, thousands and thousands of times. Passages which seemed simple or self-evident suddenly revealed hidden depths. The people who could hear and understand this were themselves transported, as they were with no other cantor. When Glantz was at his best, he was not singing or performing, he was floating in communion with the text and with God, and nothing else existed. How deeply and often he could let himself go into this trance depended on who was listening. This fact played a significant role in his life and career, so let's turn to that subject.

On records, we have available to us three periods of Glantz's music. They correspond to stays in New York from 1926 to 1941, Los Angeles from 1941 to 1954, and Israel from 1954 to his death in 1964. But the places aren't so important, the periods really correspond to different audiences. Leib Glantz was at his best only in the first and third periods because that is when he had a public that could appreciate him for what he really was. In the New York period, the audience was composed mostly of immigrants brought up on Jewish culture in European ghetto communities. Their primary identification was Jewish, not American. They spoke Yiddish, they knew the Hebrew of the prayers, they compared cantors the way people today compare basketball players and rock stars. Everybody had a favorite. People would travel from Brooklyn to the Bronx to hear a new cantor. *Chazones* was where it was



at. These were the people Glantz had been brought up with, he was one of them. He reminded them of the cantors they had heard in their youth. They recognized him, knew what he was doing, appreciated the subtleties of his art.

The freelance life came to an end in 1941. My sense is that this era marked the end of *chazones* as the national music of the Jews. At any rate, my father took a position at Sinai Temple in Los Angeles where the audience was largely second generation. The members of Sinai Temple saw themselves as Americans. They looked down on immigrants and on Ghetto culture. They were Jewish, of course, but as a religion, not as a culture or nationality. They wanted to be like everyone else. They weren't really comfortable with music that sounded foreign. Glantz's *chazones* got toned down. I vaguely remember discussions about this between my father and mother. It bothered him a lot. He felt unappreciated, out of his element. He longed to get back to New York.

For the third period, In Israel, Glantz was back in his element again. For the people there, Judaism was a total way of life. Everyone spoke Hebrew. They understood every nuance of interpretation, every new idea that Glantz expressed in a tone or a change of dynamics. The response to his making *aliyah* was quite extraordinary. The streets in front of the synagogue had to be blocked off for the first Selichot service. People were desperate to get in. One person in the crowd threatened the ticket-taker with a knife. The newspapers carried stories about the service, and among the people who had tickets were some of the most prominent musicians, politicians, writers and scholars of Israel. But long before that, the appreciative Israeli public provided my father with a chance to re-experience the fame and adoration that were his during the magical days of Kiev, Kishinev and New York. Not surprisingly, the response of the Israeli people stimulated him to produce some of his best work. The most striking thing is the return of the intensity, the raw emotional and religious fervor.

If one looks carefully at what has been written about my father, one notices a contradiction. On the one hand, people write about his passion for the ancient *nusach*. On the other hand, he was hailed as the "pioneer of the new way" in *Hazzanu*. How do we resolve this paradox? One way to understand it is to look at the relationship between Blues and Jazz. The Blues was the music of poor musicians who were largely self-taught and who belonged to a persecuted minority. It was a folk art. Jazz used Blues themes to create a much more complicated music. Cantorial music was Jewish Blues. Glantz was born to a family of five generations of cantors, rooted in tradition and embedded in an Eastern Europe characterized by pogroms and persecution. Glantz grew up with the old, but he was a creative artist in a world that was changing. Like the jazz musicians, he took the old themes and did different things with them. His variations were new, the themes weren't. And so, the paradox was resolved; the old exists in the new.

In a way, Glantz started a Jewish Jazz, but there were no followers because the really talented musicians of the next generation got into American music. Fifty years earlier, Gershwin might have written for the synagogue and Jolson might really have been a cantor.

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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Much as he didn't like to think so, Glantz represents the end of an epic, not a new beginning. He left no followers, not even imitators. Such, I think, is the verdict of history from which there is no appeal. I'd like to thank you all very much.

### *Hazzan Solomon Mendelson:*

How wonderful to hear the admiration of a son for his father. And now it's my great pleasure to call upon our walking encyclopedia of *Hazzanut* and Jewish culture, Akiva Zimmermann. Akiva is a journalist in Tel Aviv and an historian as well. He has written two books, *Beron Yachad* and *Sha'arei Ron*. Another book of his, *Zachor Ezkerenu Od*, is being translated at this time, and will probably be ready for publication soon. Among many other awards, he recently received Israel's coveted *Shalom Aleichem* Prize. It is my great pleasure to call upon our yearly treat (perhaps we should make him an honorary Hazzan), Akiva Zimmermann.

### *Akiva Zimmermann:*

Mr. Chairman, my dear beloved friend, *Hazzan Solomon Mendelson*, Mrs. Mendelson, my very dear beloved friend, Dr. Kalman Glantz, and Ezra Glantz, his beautiful charming young daughter Shani Glantz, *chaverim, chaverot*. First of all, Ezra, I didn't know that you are such a beautiful speaker. I know you for so many years, and now I discovered a new talent! It took me one year to prepare this lecture, believe me ... more than one year, you know this!

It is already a tradition for me to participate in the conventions of the Cantors Assembly. Since 1975 I have taken part in most conventions, and since 1985 I have been lecturing at the conventions. I pay tribute to the memory of cantors and personalities who influenced Jewish music in past generations. Most of them I never met. I am thrilled, believe me, I am thrilled to stand before you today as we commemorate the 100th birthday of Leib Glantz, the greatest cantor of our generation. Between the verses of *Birkat Kohanim*, the Priestly Blessing, it is customary to recite a silent prayer, a supplement regarding dreams. The text appears in the Talmud, Berachot 55b. The introduction to the text is: if one had a dream but is uncertain whether the dream forbodes good or evil, let him stand before the *kohanim* at the time of the priestly blessing, and let him say:

*ribono shel olam, ani shelach vachalomotai shelach;*  
*chalom chalanti, ve'eini yodeia mah hu* 'Master of the world, I am yours and my dreams are yours; I have dreamed a dream, but I do not know what it indicates'.  
*Yehi ratzon milefanecha, hashem elokai veilohei avotai,*  
*sheyiheyu kol chalomotai alai ve'al kol yisrael letovah*  
'may it be Your will, hashem, my God and the God of my fathers, that all my dreams regarding myself and regarding all Israel be good ones'.

This would indicate that if someone goes for two weeks without a dream, he has a bad personality because a dream means *chazon* 'vision', and someone without a vision is called in



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the Talmud a bad personality. I have never dreamed that of all people who admired the greatest cantor of our generation, Leib Glantz, when he was alive, I would be privileged to be the driving power for arranging events in *Eretz Yisrael* and in the diaspora in connection with his 100th birthday.

Leib Glantz was born in Kiev on the 23rd *Sivan*, 5658, the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 1898. His father and both grandfathers were *hazzanim*, so he was privileged to be born into the world of *Hazzanut*. He started his career as a *Hazzan* at age 4, *daven' n* *Musaf* in his grandfather's *Shul*. He finished his career in Tel Aviv, during the outgoing of *Shabbat Shirah* 5724: February, 1964. Those who attended our 47th convention at the Mark Plaza Hotel in Milwaukee remember, I am sure, my lecture on *Chamishah Shehalchu* commemorating five giant Hazzanic spirits. One of them was Leib Glantz. Today, my lecture will be dedicated to his personality alone. He was, as is described in the Kavod Award presented posthumously in May, 1964 at the 15th convention, "a uniquely gifted *Hazzan*, composer and scholar whose original and authentic contributions to the music of the Synagogue will help keep his memory alive." It was signed by Moses Silverman, President of the Cantors Assembly, and Samuel Rosenbaum, Executive Vice President.

The great Hebrew poet Natan Alterman once wrote that he was born twins, not physically of course, but spiritually. And the same we can say about Leib Glantz, he was also born twins. The twins were *Hazzanut* and Zionism. His personality was a combination of intellectual and emotional love for Judaism, and it led him to be active in both fields, as a *Hazzan* and as a Zionist leader. He was active in the leadership of *Hechalutz* and *Tze'irei Tzion*: *Hazzanut* and Zionism, one completes the other. And his *Hazzanut* was a great help to the Zionist movement.

Mr. Yitzhak Cohen, Deputy Minister of Finance in Israel 35 years ago, in his book about Kishinev Jewry, wrote that when Glantz came to Kishinev as a young refugee he fascinated the Kishinev Jewry with his prayers and singing, and used his voice to help Jews to come to *Eretz Yisrael*. Mr. Cohen told that when the immigrants needed money to pay for the ship which would bring them to *Eretz Yisrael*, they engaged Leib Glantz for a *Minchah/Maariv* concert, and Glantz dedicated all the income for the payment of their transportation. And so he did many times, dedicating his prayers to help Jews come to *Eretz Yisrael*. He was involved in Zionist life from his youth; its fundraising and cultural programs, serving as a delegate to 11 Zionist congresses: twice from Russia, 7 times from America, and twice from *Eretz Yisrael*.

He was full of love for *Hazzanut* and for Israel. He visited *Eretz Yisrael* many times, in 1930, 1947, 1949 and 1952. When he was established and popularly acclaimed and economically secure, he decided to fulfill his vision. In 1954 he settled in Israel, and there at last he felt at home. As it is written in Psalm 132: *zot menuchati adei ad, po eshev ki ivitiha* 'this is my resting place for ever and ever, here I will dwell for I have desired it'. It is told about the distinguished *Hazzan* Nissan Blumenthal that in 1891 he was honored by his congregation and was sent with his wife on a journey to *Eretz Yisrael*. Coming back to

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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Odessa, the old Blumenthal said he had to change his compositions. "Being in *Eretz Yisrael*," he said, "gave me new inspiration, and I cannot sing as I sang before visiting Jerusalem." The same happened with Leib Glantz. Eighty-five of his 214 works were composed in *Eretz Yisrael*. Even so, he lived in the Holy Land only 9 years. It is symbolic that his last compositions, written 10 days before his death are: *Anah Halach Dodech* 'where is your beloved gone' from *Shir Hashirim*, and *Kaddish*.

In my possession are hundreds of letters he wrote to his friends, most of them in Hebrew. Looking over those letters, I learned what kind of personality he was. He had a full knowledge of Judaism. His Hebrew style is a combination based on the Bible, Talmud, Midrash and Hebrew literature. If it is said about Pini Minkowsky that he was a wonderful Hebrew writer besides being a *Hazzan*, the same can be said about Leib Glantz. I want to share something from this wonderful treasure with you. Few people know that Leib Glantz was in very close contact with the famous Jewish composer, Ernest Bloch. Glantz sent him his records and compositions, they discussed problems of *Nusach*, and Bloch was full of admiration for Glantz' compositions. With your permission, I will now read to you something from this correspondence. Ernest Bloch wrote to Glantz on December 30, 1949:

Dear Mr. Glantz;

Upon my return from an exhausting trip to Europe end of November, I found Mrs. Glantz's kind letter and the records you were so kind as to send me. I am sorry that the pressure of accumulated work during my long absence prevented me from thanking you sooner. Now I have been able, at last, to listen to your Hebrew spirituals, and I have no doubt that they will find a very warm response from those who have lived [and Bloch emphasized 'lived'] -- as you did -- the Chassidic life. As far as I can judge, your songs evoke fully such atmosphere, as do your fine interpretations of them.

With all good wishes and cordial greetings, I am

Sincerely yours,  
Ernest Bloch.

Mrs. Miriam Glantz, the wife of Leib Glantz, sent to Ernest Bloch her husband's recording of *Kol Mekadesh Shevi'i*. On May 27, 1950 Bloch replied.

Dear Mr. Glantz;

It is only this morning that I was able to play the record you were so kind to send me, and I shall not wait to send you a word. I am in the midst of my preparation to leave for my courses in Berkeley. Your *Kol Mekadesh* is very beautiful, well constructed and impressive in all. My wife, who is very cultural, loved it very much. The instrumental background is quiet and colorful, and your voice magnificent."

Leib Glantz's Chassidic music was also beloved by Albert Einstein, and the letter from Albert Einstein you can find in the book *Zeharim*, dedicated to Leib Glantz. And now, I want to read one letter in Hebrew. This letter was written the 29th of July, 1954 when Glantz decided to settle in *Eretz Yisrael*. This letter he wrote to a great Hebrew scholar, his beloved friend, Dr. Yehudah Even Shmuel. And those who understand Hebrew will understand how



glad he is that he is coming to live in *Eretz Yisrael*. It cost him \$35,000 to come to *Eretz Yisrael*! Can you imagine what that meant in 1954? And here is the letter:

*Lechaver hechacham hane'eratz, hayakar vehachaviv li meod,  
Doktor Yehudah Even Shmuel.*

*Lo yacholti lehit'apek velo lichtov lecha al hachlatati. O yoter nachon, al hitgashmut chalomi vachalom ishti. Bachamishi leSeptember avo leartzenu bapaam harishonah ... Muchrachim lehatzliach, va'ani batuach shegam atah yoter margeesh meirabimacheirim betoch hapogshim otanu umevarchim otanu bechoach im af lo befo'al. Vegam rotzeh ani leha'amin shetikra et hadvarim haba'im lematah beregashim dakeem meen hadakeem, lehazmeen otcha lavo leTif'eret Tzevi beTel Aviv ulehitpalel yachad iti bayamim hanora'im haba'im alenu letovah. Ani et'ametz lerakez beshanah zo et kol hakisufim hanafshiyim veharuchaniyim shebi shoresh nishmati behishtapchut hanefesh uvehitraptzut moothna'at lifnei elokenu shebushamayim, elokei yamenu ve'artzenu, velokei kol hakadosh sheba'olam kulo betfillah zo shel hayamim hanoraim haba'im alenu letovah. Ana bo venitpalel yachad. Miryam vehabanim vechol asher li dorshim beshlomcha.*

*Shelcha bechusidut,*

*Leib Glantz.*

He emphasized *bo lehitpallel iti*. He never wrote "come to *daven* with me," he wrote to his friends "*bo lehitpallel iti*." And in other letters he wrote *bo venizak lifnei avinu shebushamayim* 'let us cry to our Father in heaven'. And in another letter to his friend he wrote about his *daven'n on* Rosh Hashanah: *aliti lamarom berig'ei kodesh elu* 'I was in the heavens in these holy minutes'.

This was Leib Glantz from his letters. In addition to his activities as a cantor and composer, Leib Glantz was also a teacher of *Hazzanut* and Jewish music. He was a visiting professor at the University of Judaism, the West Coast branch of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, for twelve sessions. With the collaboration of Dr. Yehudah Even Shmuel and Eliezer Shteyman, he established the Institute for Jewish Religious Music known as the Cantors Academy, in Tel Aviv. He was a demanding teacher. The course of study included: General Music Background and Skills, Jewish music and Jewish Laws, Background of Jewish Prayer and Thought. His lifetime dream was to educate intellectual *Hazzanim* like himself. He did not like the idea of educating a generation of imitative *Hazzanim*, and he asked his students to be at home in the great field of *nusach* and the sources of melodies. And that was the reason why his students were not permitted to imitate records.

He used to say: "An opera singer performing an Italian or Russian opera has not to know the history and way of life of the Italian or Russian people. But a *Hazzan* must be involved in Jewish history, Bible, Talmud, Midrash, Law, as well as the background of Jewish congregations through the ages. The great Russian theatre director, Konstantin

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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Stanislovsky, used to say to his students: "don't play your role, **live it.**" Glantz used to teach his students: "don't **play Hazzanut** (on records), live it, love it." He himself lived *Hazzanut* 24 hours a day. This I have learned from his letters to his friends. In Hebrew we say: *va'ani tefilati*, which means, I identify myself with the prayer, and that was how Glantz lived.

His father and first teacher, Cantor Kalman Glantz, recognized the talents of his son Leibeleh when he was a little child. He used to say to his friends, "you don't know who is my son Leibeleh, he will be not only a *Hazzan*, he will be one of the greatest, if not the greatest." And he said that when Leibeleh was a child of 8 years. Even as a child, Leib Glantz did not use anyone's melodies, he composed his own music. Kalman Glantz used to say to his friends, "if you don't believe me, you can examine my son." So the young Leibeleh was asked to sing 7 times *Hashkivenu* and he improvised 7 different compositions, and all this without any preparation.

He dreamed of seeing his music published, but his music was published only after his death, when seven books appeared in Tel Aviv. They contained music of Weekdays, Shabbat, High Holidays, Shalosh Regalim and Selichot, as well as secular Hebrew and Yiddish songs. Some of his music was never published. In my collection is one of the unpublished compositions, *Sheva B'rachot*, the Wedding Service. Thanks to my efforts, a street in Tel Aviv was named Leib Glantz Street, and I am now trying to get the Postal Authority in Israel to dedicate a stamp honoring Leib Glantz as well as other famous *Hazzanim*.

I want to suggest that the H.L. Miller Cantorial School and the Jewish Theological Seminary dedicate a special seminar to the creativity of Leib Glantz. Professor Max Wohlberg wrote: "with the arrival of Leib Glantz on the Hazzanic scene, the cantorate acquired previously unimagined dimensions. Glantz brought to it imaginative manipulation of the *nusach* and motives, and introduced into our repertoire a noble concept of tunefulness and a dynamic intensity unheard before. He was also fortunate in possessing an incredibly flexible vocal apparatus which permitted him to explore an endless number of delicate nuances and dynamic effects. Glantz was a masterful manipulator of the *nusach* and a relentless prober of the liturgical texts." Professor Wohlberg used to say that our generation will be marked in the world of *Hazzanut* by the voice of Moshe Koussevitsky and by the creativity of Leib Glantz.

Dear friends, it is symbolic that this year we mark the 100th birthday of Leib Glantz. Next year, *im yirtzeh hashem*, marks the 100th birthday of Moshe Koussevitsky. I am sure that the Cantors Assembly will mark this event in next year's convention. Due to time constraints, I am not able to say everything I would have liked to share with you. Even a whole week is not enough, but I hope, dear friends and especially the new generation of cantors, that you have learned something about the phenomenon named Leib Glantz. *Maran divishmaya, yehch hesa'adchon, kol zeman ve'idan venomar amen* 'may our Father in Heaven be your help at all times, and let us say Amen'. Thank you.

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## Reading the Liturgy through the Spectacles of Theology: The Case of *Unetaneh Tokef*

Professor Neil Gillman

Chair: *Hazzan Shimon Gewirtz*

*Hazzan Simon Gewirtz:*

Good morning. My name is Cantor Shimon Gewirtz and I am happy to be the presenter. I will be very brief, so as to leave more room for Dr. Gillman to speak. Dr. Neil Gillman is a Professor of Jewish Philosophy at the Jewish Theological Seminary. Originally from Canada, he studied at McGill University and received his PhD in philosophy from Columbia University. He was ordained at the Jewish Theological Seminary and as many of you know, he is the author of *Sacred Fragments: Recovering Theology for Modern Jews, Conservative Judaism*, and more recently, *The Death of Death*, which is subtitled *Resurrection and Immortality in Jewish Thought*. Having had Dr. Gillman at my synagogue some years ago for a weekend as Scholar in Residence, it gives me great pleasure to introduce Dr. Neil Gillman.

*Professor Neil Gillman:*

Thank you very much, Shimon. *Boker tov*, everybody. You all have copies, but before I actually speak about this text, I wanted to tell you a little bit about why I'm involved in discussions of this kind. As you know, my field is philosophy/theology and I have for a long time been curious about how to teach the theology of the rabbis, what we call Rabbinic theology. In the modern era, you know, we have our canon of modern Jewish theologians. In the Medieval period, there are recognized philosophies. And the material in the Bible is pretty consistent, pretty clear. The range of possibilities is not that wide.

But when you get into the Talmudic period, roughly from the beginning of the first century B.C.E. until you hit Saadya in the 10th century C.E., and when you're dealing basically with theology expressed through Aggadah, how in the world do you pull all of the Aggadah together on any one single theological issue? The Aggadah is a series of very personal homilies, sermons, by individual rabbis on individual occasions, and you're never sure if that's exactly what they did say. And they say everything, and every good rabbi knows that if you need a Midrash to support whatever it is that you're going to say, you'll find one. Somehow or other you'll find one.

But the range is unbelievable. Solomon Shechter, in his *Aspects of Rabbinic Theology*, said that the place where he always looks is in the liturgy. I have found that to be extremely fruitful. I do not teach rabbinic theologies through the Talmudic Aggadah, but I do teach a lot of Siddur and Machzor. And I teach theology through the lens of the liturgical passage. Because especially those portions of the liturgy that are Talmudic in origin and have

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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the *baruch atah adonai* formula so there is a quasi-Halachic basis to it, those portions of the liturgy are consensual, they're canonical. No statement got into a *baruch atah adonai* formula unless it was Halachically approved, it's the same kind of process through which any kind of Halachic decision making was made. So it approaches a much more consensual, canonical kind of teaching, and so then you begin reading liturgy for the theology that it contains.

Then you begin to ask yourself crazy questions like why did the rabbis pick this word or this phrase? Why is it that certain *pesukim* got into the liturgy and others did not? And what happens to the text when it goes from *tanach* into the liturgy? What happens, for example, to *shlosh esrei midot: el rachum vechanun, erech apayim verav chesed ... notseir chesed ... nosei avon...*? The verse ends with *lo yenakeh* in the Bible. By the time it gets into the liturgy it's *venakeh*, right? Now, there, the Bible has already changed its mind; we know this because *lo yenakeh* is not found in later versions of the Bible.

Other questions arise. You don't say *yonser or uvorei choshech, oseh shalom uvorei et hara*. But it's in *Yeshayahu*, right? Yet in the liturgy it becomes *oseh shalom uvoray et hakol!* So why is it that in the *Sheva Brachot* they picked up *od yishama be'arei yehudah ... kol sason vekol simcha, kol chatan vekol kalah?* They put that verse from Jeremiah into the *Sheva Brachot* verbatim. Why certain texts and not other texts? And frequently, what happens to these texts when they are adapted into different sections of the liturgy? So it's questions such as this I've been doing a lot of thinking on and writing about and teaching, mainly teaching.

In recent years, I have begun to think that basically, it's the same *kalah* dressed differently. Each year I teach a course which is basically a course in liturgy. The texts are liturgical texts, through which I teach theology. And each year I call it different things, so I can get away with not being accused of teaching the same course two successive years. But more recently, one of those dresses for the *kalah* is that I specifically study images of God in liturgical texts. How is God portrayed in liturgical texts? And here are my assumptions, and I want to say them very quickly and get beyond all of this.

First of all, no human being really knows what God really is. We don't have photographs of God. What we do have, I think, are humanly crafted metaphors. Human beings have experiences of God, they capture those experiences in human language. Each human language uses materials that are familiar to us from every day life. *Adonai ro'ee lo echsar* (God is a Shepard). *Tzur yisrael, kumah be'ezrat yisrael* (God is a military hero). *Avinu malkenu* (God is a parent, God is a sovereign), and there are many, many more. What I do then is look at all the liturgical texts for examples. I study *Adon Olam*, which is one of the most profound theological texts we have. You would never know it because you sing it to get to the *Oneg Shabbat* quickly, but it is an unusually profound text. And the image there is that God is everything, *Adon Olam*, 'Lord of all there is'. And yet God is very close (*beyado afkeed ruchee*), and very intimate (*vehu eilee vechai go'alee*). The message is: total security, just as in Psalm 91, *Yoshev Beseter*, which also bears images of God's protection. And at the other extreme, we have images of God abandoning us, in Psalm 13 and Psalm 44, which is

really a holocaust Psalm. And then I get into actual liturgical texts, and one of the first that I began to study was *Unetaneh Tokef* because what I found in it is an extraordinary example of how a metaphor of God is transformed within the context of the *piyyut*. In other words, God begins with one image and by the end that initial image is tossed out and a completely new image emerges. So this is not a simple Psalm, like *adonai ro'ee lo echsar*, where you have pretty much one consistent metaphor and the entire Psalm is crafted on the basis of that metaphor.

What you have here is a complex metaphor which evolves in the course of the *piyyut*. And much more interesting to me is that the evolution that the image of God undergoes in the course of the *piyyut* is a kind of microcosm of the transformation in our own feelings that we undergo in the course of the *Yamim Nora'im* experience. So two things are taking place here at the same time. There is a theological/literary dimension. The text takes the image of God and plays with it, and stretches it, and expands it, and undermines it, and supports it, and turns it on its head, and at the same time as the text does it, we do it too, internally.

Now, this assumes that *Unetaneh Tokef* is the actual climax, the dramatic high point of the *Yamim Nora'im* liturgy, and this is interesting because I don't think it was intended to be that way. *Unetaneh Tokef* is a superb example of where popular religion supercedes Halachah. It's much easier to get rid of *Malchuyot-Zichronot-Shofarot*, as I've discovered, than it is to get rid of *Unetaneh Tokef*. Or *Kol Nidre*, for that matter. *Kol Nidre* and *Unetaneh Tokef* have absolutely no Halachic standing whatsoever. My misfortune was that although I had almost no formal Jewish education, I grew up in a very old traditional *shul*. It was in Quebec City, there were almost no Jews around at all, but I had a father who was a *shul* Jew and who took me with him to *shul*. For as far back as I can remember, I went to *shul*, he never allowed me to go to the Junior Congregation. He said, that's not the way you're going to learn to *daven*. If you want to learn how to *daven*, you're going to sit next to me. So I sat next to him and I learned how to *daven*.

I remember being this little kid standing in a men's *shul*, surrounded by older people with long beards and saying to myself, who of these people is not going to be here next Rosh Hashanah? Who was here last year that is not here this year? Who is here this year and is not going to be here next year? *Techaleh shanah vekelelotheha, yachel shanah uvirchoteha* (let a year end with its curses, and let another begin with blessings). *Unetaneh Tokef* is the turning point, it's the fulcrum. You look back, you look forward. You say goodbye, you say hello. This is the essence of Rosh Hashanah. In scholarly language we call it the **liminal** moment, it's the threshold moment. Something ends, something begins.

Every Shabbos something ends, something begins. On Rosh Chodesh the same thing happens. Most great ritual events are a turning point. I am convinced that, though this is not originally what the rabbis intended, *Unetaneh Tokef* is the turning point of the service. It is here that we experience the internal transformation that's to take place on this season, and that turning point, that transformation, is a transformation from a sense of being judged, from a sense of doom, to a sense of being accepted and forgiven. We move from the sense that I am

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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inadequate, I am unworthy, to the sense that in God's hands all can be forgiven, and my possibilities for a new start are endless. Now that's what happens in the *tefillah* and you can see this specifically by just reading what happens to the image of God in the text itself, how God changes in the text. Again, this is not a text which has one simple paradigmatic image of God. This is a text in which the image of God is totally fluid, the text subverts itself.

It begins with image of God A, and ends with the image of God B where B turns A on its head, and that takes place simply within the course of the prayer. This is not only religiously, spiritually the high point, the most powerful moment, the most impressive moment of the service, but also the moment of the service where you really get the feel in your guts of the fragility, the more strongly than ever just what Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are supposed to mean in the Jewish sensibility.

Now, the last thing I want to do is a typical JTS *Wissenschaft* analysis of this liturgy. We know the legend, it was one of the many, many myths that the Seminary shattered -- in my own theological education -- when my professor said at the beginning that its author, Rav Amnon, never lived, and if he lived he wasn't a rabbi and besides it's not a 12th-to-13th century *piyyut* but probably goes back to the late-8th century and bears unmistakable traces of the Byzantine Mass for the Dead. Okay? So do you know where you find that? In Eric Werner's *The Sacred Bridge*. He has an "Excursus on the Hebrew and Byzantine Antecedents of the *Dies Irae*" which is brilliant. It'll destroy *Unetaneh Tokef* for you completely, if you want to let it, because the *piyyut* shares theological and literary motifs with Christian hymnody.

But let's ignore all that. Ignore your JTS *Wissenschaft*. What I want to do with you is simply read the text as it is, allright? Forget where it came from, let's just read the text in terms of what it is. At a certain point this text became what it is, and at a certain point it got into the Machzor. At a certain point Jews began to recite it, and our concern should be: what is its impact today?

In terms of the *piyyut*'s setting, we recite it immediately before Kedushat Musaf, and the end of the text of course leads right into the Kedushah. One of the interesting issues on this text is, exactly where does *Unetaneh Tokef* end? For that matter, where does *Nishmat Kol Chai* end? Does it end before *Ha'eil*? Does it end before ~~the end of~~ *Hamelech*? Does it end before *Uvemak'halot*? Or does it end at the *brachah*? I asked Professor Schmeltzer (my *piyyut* expert), "where does it end"? He said, "who knows where it ends?" My sense is that it ends with *ush'meim karata bishmecha*. Then, *aseh leman shemecha* is already the beginning of Kedushah, that's my sense. But we'll see. So, we begin.

*Unetaneh tokef kedushat hayom* 'let us acknowledge the power of the day'!

Incidentally, I wanted to say one other thing in relation to Rav Amnon. This is one of those rare instances where I think the text fueled the legend rather than the other way around. Most instances where you have a story or a legend connected with a text, it is the legend that keeps

the text alive. In this instance, I think the text itself is so powerful that it is the text that has kept the legend alive.

So here we have the famous Midrash that God sits originally on the Throne of Justice and then gets up from the Throne of Justice when God hears the prayers of Israel. He gets up from the Throne of Justice and sits on the Throne of Compassion. So we move immediately from justice to compassion, from *tzedek* to *chesed*. *Veteshev alav beemer* 'You sit upon it firmly.' *Be'emet* is not 'in truth', you don't sit in truth. *Emet Ve'emunah* gives us the clue. It means **loyalty**; I am committed, firm. So You, God, sit on this chair firmly committed to judge us.

And now, who is this God who is sitting on this chair? Look at the way the metaphor just sort of explodes. *Emet ki atah hu dayan* 'You are Judge'. *Umochi'ach* 'You are the prosecutor. *Veyodei'a va'eid* 'You are the witness'. *Vechotev vechotem* 'You are the court stenographer who keeps the records'. *Vesopher umoneh* 'You are the accountant who counts them'. *Vetizkor kol hanishkachot* 'You, God, are the ultimate databank'. What is this unbelievable phrase, *zocher kol hanishkachot*? Everywhere else in the world, people forget. Things that you do are forgotten. Before you, God, nothing is forgotten. You remember the forgotten things.

So look at the way God appears here. *Dayan*: You are judge and prosecutor, You count and You record, You are witness and court stenographer. *Sopher umoneh*: You are the ultimate databank, everything we've ever done, You know. It's all in the record. *Vetiftach et sefer hazichronot*: and You open the book, *Umei'eilav yikarei* and the book is read. *Vechotam yad kot adam bo*: *chotam yad* is of course, myself, my identity, that which makes me, me. The hand, the fingerprint, the signature of every one of us is in that book.

So the scene is the Heavenly court, and in this Heavenly court, I have come up for judgement. And who am I facing? I am facing the ultimate judge, prosecutor, witness, stenographer and databank where everything I've ever done is known, is all in the book, and the book is open, and the book is read. And I am there in the book. Every one of us is there in the book. Is there any wonder why, when we read this, we begin to cry every year, predictably begin to cry? This is terrifying. This is terrifying because you take the thing seriously. In other words, this thing is actually going on, up there, now, today; no symbolic metaphorical stuff, right? It's the real thing.

Well, I think it's important that we understand it as the real thing, and I'll try to show how I do that. So this is the ultimate court of judgment, and I'm up before the bar of judgment, and God is everything. God has all the roles. The text continues: *uveshosfar gadol yitaka* 'a great Shofar is sounded. *Vekol demamah dakah yishama* 'a still, small voice is heard. It's from the *Eiliyahu* stories, of course. Instead of 'a still small voice,' I translate this as 'the sound of silence', *kol demamah*. The still sound of silence is heard, angels tremble, they're shaken. *Veyomru hineh yom hadin* 'and they say: it's the day of judgment'. *Lifkod al tzva marom badin* 'God comes to judge us today. *Ki lo yizku be'inecha badin* 'indeed, no one is guiltless in Your eyes'. *Vechol ba'ei olam ta'avir lefanecha kivnei maron*

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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'all humankind passes before You like a flock of sheep. Now, the scholarship on *kivnei maron* of course is that it's not as a flock of sheep but rather as a military review where soldiers pass before the reviewing stand. That is the scholarly *Wissenschaft*

*Question from the floor:*

Did the author understand it that way?

*Professor Gillman:*

I

I think not. Because I think that the metaphor changes, you see. The very next sentence is *kevakarat ro'eh edro* 'as a shepherd musters his flock'. It's fascinating to me that the *Hazzan* begins the repetition of this *piyyut* most frequently *at kevakarat*. And it's interesting that the melodies for *kevakarat* are very pastoral and lyric, and that is the first point in the entire *tefillah* where there is a measure of softness. Until now, it's very very hard. It's very powerful, it's very dramatic and it's very serious. God is judge prosecutor, court stenographer, witness, the whole thing, right? There is no defense attorney in all of this. There is no defense attorney, and God forces all of us to pass in review. The book is read and our names are there, and it's accountability.

But do we pass before God as the commanding general, or do we pass before God as a shepherd? Those are two very different things. So, whatever *kivnei maron* was originally, what the author meant by it, I think is deliberately ambiguous. He may have known that it was a military review. Or he may have used it also to mean 'sheep,' and then followed it with *kevakarat ro'eh edro ma'avir tzono tachat shivto; ken ta'avir vetispot vetimneh vetifkod nefesh kol cha; vetachtoch kitzvah lechol beryah vetichtov et gezar dinam*. The soft, deceptively pastoral note that *Hazzanim* generally introduce at *kevakarat* is totally out of place here because the meaning of the text is hard. Once a shepherd causes the flock to pass before him, he singles out those who are going to be axed, right? *Ken ta'avir vetispot vetimneh vetichtov nefesh kol chai* 'You visit, You count, You appoint, You consider every living thing. But then: *vetachtoch* 'You cut', *kitzvah* 'You make an end to *chol bryah* 'to every creature,' and You write their judgment.

So, the *kevakarat* is deceptive here. It sounds nurturing, but it's not. This shepherd is not a nurturing shepherd. This metaphor is much more characteristic of the entire first half of the *piyyut* where God is judge, prosecutor, witness, stenographer, reads the sentence, ultimate databank, it's all recorded, my signature is there, God looks at every living thing, decides who's going to live, and who's going to die, makes, decides everybody's death. Now, I submit that classically, this shaped the sensibility of the Jew as he or she entered the Rosh Hashanah/Yom Kippur season. It was looked at as the time when our fates are decided upon for the year. This, I think, made it much more important than *Malchuyot, Zichronot, Shofarot*. Because I think that, as the late Chancellor Gershon Cohen said after the JTS faculty decided to take the issue of ordaining women the first time around in 1979,

"something very important happened today." I said, "what was it"? He said, "I learned that religion is more powerful than Halachah."

This too is a case where religion is much more powerful than Halachah. This is popular religion. This is not the academy. This is not the Yeshivah world. There is no Halachic standing to this whatsoever. It's like Kol Nidre. There is absolutely no Halachic standing to the recitation of Kol Nidre on the eve of Yom Kippur. But *Unetaneh Tokef* had much more impact on shaping the sensibility of *Am Yisrael* than did the Halachic prayers. That was because of the sheer power of the metaphor. So you have to understand that until modernity, Jews read this and understood it as *mamash*, namely, they saw the Heavenly court gathering, and they saw themselves in that court, and they saw the final judgment, and they saw God judging and prosecuting and witnessing and recording and the databank, and the book being read. Think how many of our kids who had the pleasure/misfortune of studying in a traditional Yeshivah have come home in a state of terror on *erev Rosh Hashanah* and asked: "where is **my** name, am I in the good book?" Because of the vividness of the metaphor.

*Comment from the floor:*

I'm positive that there is a difference between this text and Kol Nidre. In hospitals just before the High Holy Days I will chant the Kol Nidre for patients. And I think what moves people with Kol Nidre is not what it says, because what it says is extremely dry and legalistic, but rather the melody. In the case of *Unetaneh Tokef*, I think it's the actual text.

*Professor Gillman:*

You're absolutely right, and the proof is that there are many melodies for *Unetaneh Tokef*, and only one for Kol Nidre.

Okay, so I'm not terribly interested in the next paragraph, *Berosh Hashanah*, which just makes the image even more vivid and concrete. But it ends with *mi yei'ani umi yei'asher, mi yishafel u'mi yaroom* 'who shall become poor and who rich, who shall be lowered and who raised'? All of this is a *perush*, an unpacking of *vetichtov et gezar dinam* 'you inscribe their fate; these are the possibilities'. Well, he could have stopped with *vetichtov et gezar dinam* and then said *uteshuvala utefillah utzedakah* 'but repentance, prayer and charity cancel the stern decree'. But he didn't! He said *vetichtov et gezar dinam*. And then he says, okay, you want me to be more specific? Here, let's go: *mi yichyeh umi yamut* 'who shall live and who shall die', etc. What are the different ways in which you can die? So that is the climax, I think, or the conclusion, the closure to the first half of the *piyyut*, at which point we, the *kahal* say "no!" The *kahal* answers with *uteshuvala utefillah utzedakah ma'avirin et ro'a hagezerah*.

Now, with this you can do an interesting addendum to your dissertation on congregational liturgical outbursts. Technically speaking, we're supposed to say *Unetaneh*

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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*Tokef* to ourselves. We stand, we say the whole thing and then the *Hazzan* picks up. But what exactly am I supposed to say? Am I supposed to say to *mi yarum*, or am I supposed to say to the end of the next page? I think I'm supposed to say to *mi yarum*, then the *Hazzan* is supposed to pick up wherever he-or-she picks up, and then stops at *mi yarum*. And then, we say in protest "no; *uteshuvah utefillah utzedakah ma'avirin et ro'a hagezerah*." What does this say? Let's think it through clearly. What it says is: hey, stop, this is not the last judgment. This is in no way the last judgment, and Mr. *Paytan*, you've done a wonderful job to build up the drama of this thing. Shofars and angels and books are being read and still small voices are being heard, and everybody is shaking and terrified and things like that. And God is the judge, prosecutor, witness, court stenographer, etc., etc. And *gezar dinam* is being written. But we say: nonsense. It's not *gezar dinum*, no *gezar dinam* is being written. It's a very tentative, wishy-washy *gezar dinam*. Because: *teshuvah utefillah utzedakah ma'avirin et ro'a hagezerah*.

Now, what does that mean? And of course as you know, there are two different *peshat* readings. One is that it means cancel the evil **decree**; and the other is cancel or avert the *ro'at hagezerah*, the **severity** of the decree. One of the differences between the Silverman and the Harlow *machzorim* is that Silverman says avert the severe decree, and Harlow says avert the severity of the decree. I would like to suggest that it's the first. The *paytan* knew Hebrew just as well as we do. He could have said *et ro'at hagezerah*, but he didn't. He said *et ro'a hagezerah*. And that's the same as *gezerah ra'ah*, except that it rhymes and the rhythm is better with *tzedakah*. Besides *leha'avir* does not necessarily mean 'to cancel'. It means 'to avert', to avoid it, right? It doesn't imply 'am I going to die'? Absolutely I'm going to die, but it doesn't have to be now, it can be put off.

How is that done? Amazingly by sending me back. The *paytan* sends me back to the normal everyday things that I'm supposed to do as a Jew. Mainly, I'm supposed to do *teshuvah*, I'm supposed to *daven*, and I'm supposed to do *gemilut chasadim*. So, it's not apocalyptic, and it's not Big Bang end of the world, the Last Judgment. It takes place every Rosh Hashanah/Yom Kippur, and it's not final. And how do I diffuse the drama of the whole scenario? By doing the things that I am normally expected to do as a Jew, the everyday responsibilities that every jew has all the time: *teshuvah*, *tefillah*, *tzedakah*.

I want to come back to that in a second. But if you turn the page ... why is it that *teshuvah tefillah, utzedakah* work? What is the reason for their efficacy? Because we thought of God as *dayan umochi'ach*. Angels were coming, big macho blustering God. All the angels are terrified. It's the last judgment. But now it turns out that You're not that kind of God at all. And suddenly the metaphor changes completely. Suddenly You are *kasheh lich'os veno'ach lirtzot*. You're a soft touch. *Ki lo tachpots bemot hamet*, You don't want this business of *tachtoch kitzvah lechol briyah, mi yichyeh umi yamut*. You don't do this at all. *Ki im beshubo midarko vechayah*, You want *teshuvah* and continued life. *Ve'ad yom moto techakeh lo, im yashuv miyad tekabla*, not only do You like *teshuvah*, You are a soft touch, *teshuvah*-sort of God. Until the very end of my life, I have a sliver of open door. For my entire lifetime, until the very, very end of my life, if I do *teshuvah*, *miyad tekabla*. You

wait for me until the very last moment of my life and You leave a sliver of openness, a tiny crack. But I can still get in through the door, even though I am about to die. Why? Because of the **second** *emet*.

Now, look at this. We began with *emet ki atah hu dayan umochi'ach*. In other words, the first part of the metaphor presents the big macho God. Judge, prosecutor, etc. begins with the **first** *emet*. And now, the *paytan* is telling you, I'm beginning with *emet* again, but with this *emet*, I'm giving you an entirely different image. And sure enough, the image is transformed before my eyes. *Emet ki atah hu yotzram ve'atah yodei'a yitzram, ki hem basar vadam*. You are their creator. The *atah yodei'a yitzram* here does not mean *yetzer hara* vs *yetzer hatov*. It means the manner in which they were **created**: *vayitzer adonai et ha'adam afar min ha'adama*. That's Bereishit 2:7, God created 'man', *adam*, 'dust from the earth', *afar min ha'adamah*. This is the text that's being metaphorized here. *Atah hu yotzram... atah yodei'a yitzram... basar vadam... adam yesodo mei'afar vesofo le'afar*.

Now this is all in answer to the question: why are You so quick to accept our *teshuvah*? The answer is because You know how we were created. You know what we are. And I would like to suggest that the subtext of this answer is, not only do You know who we are, You are in a sense co-responsible for what we are. You made us this way. So God, You don't have a choice. This big blustering macho God of the first part is absolutely reduced to being a patsy. Because what does the *paytan* do? And what do we do as a result? We remind God of the fact that listen, if we sinned, it is because You made us this way. So You are as much responsible for our sinfulness as we are. Therefore, You've got to keep the door open for us until the very last moment. And this is a complex midrash on *vayitzer adonai et ha'adam afar min ha-adamah*. You have it all in the *piyyut*: *ki hu yodei'a yitzram*, and then *adam yesodo mei'afar vesofo le'afar*. This is all a reference to the Genesis story including *benafsho yavi lachmo*.

*Adam harishon* was punished. One of the punishments was that humans had to sweat: *bezei'at apecha tochal lechem* 'by the sweat of your brow shall you eat bread'. *Benafsho* here does not mean 'with his soul', but 'with his **life**'. We work, we expend our life force working for bread, and then, look at the futility. *Mashul kecheres hanishbar* 'like a broken potsherd', *kechatsir yavesh* 'like withered grass', *ketzitz* novel 'like a faded flower', *ketzel over* 'like a fleeting shadow', *ke'an'an kalah* 'like a passing cloud', *keru'ach noshavet* 'like a blowing wind', *uche' avak porei'ach* 'like floating dust', *vechachalom ya'uf* 'like a vanished dream'. These are all images of vulnerability, of fragility. This says: look how You made us, God. And all of this is prefaced by *emet*. And all of **this** *emet* is prefaced by a completely different version of the metaphor for God. And the turning point of the *piyyut* is *teshuvah, tefillah, tzedakah*, which we shout out in protest to the first two paragraphs. And by doing so we say to the *paytan*: "**no**," in a kind of antiphonal response. To the entire first two paragraphs up to *umi yaroom* we shout out: "no, no, no, stop, no it's not true! It's not true; 'teshuvah, tefillah, tzedakah ma'avirin et ro'a hagezerah'.

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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It's not final, and it's not apocalyptic. It's not terrible and terrifying; it's every day, and there are ways out. And why are there ways out? Because of the second emet, because this God is not that kind of God. This God is a soft-touch guy. He waits for us. And there's more. Suddenly there appears the missing metaphor from the entire court scene. Who was not present in that court scene? What was the piece of the 'court' metaphor that was missing? The **defense attorney**! We now have a defense attorney. God has now become the defense attorney as well. So since You made us in this totally fragile kind of way, You have to accept our *teshuvah*: *ad yom moto techakeh loh*. We are totally vulnerable, *ve'a'atah hu melech el chai vekayam* 'You are everlasting.' Therefore, we're in Your hands.

Now, *ein kitzvah lishnotechah*. The reason I'm convinced that this is still part of the *piyyut* is because of *vetachtoch kitzvah lechol beriyah* earlier on. One of the things You do is to decree a boundary, an end, a *ketz* for everybody that lives, whereas You have **no ketz**: *ein kitzvah lishnotecha* 'no end of years'. *Ve'ein ketz le'orech yamecha* 'no end of days'. *Ve'ein lesha'er markevot kevodechah* 'inconceivable Your glory'. *Ve'ein lefaresh ilum shemecha* 'and no explaining Your mystery'. *Shimcha na'eh lecha ve'atah na'eh lishmecha* 'Your name benefits You'. *Ush'meinu karata bishmecha* 'and our name is linked to Yours'. That is the final blockbuster of the prayer. Look God, it's not as if You are God and we Your people are separate. We're not, we're linked. Your fate is linked to ours. How You treat Israel will determine how You are treated in the world. Our name is forever linked with Your name, *ush'meinu karata bishmecha* 'our name and Your name are one. Our destinies are linked, and therefore, the final appeal of *Unetaneh Tokef* is to the *brit*, to the relationship with God.

Okay, so now go back. Why do I read this? Largely because of what happens to the very complex system of metaphors for God. And here's my heresy: the metaphors are **humanly** crafted. Our people way, way back understood this day as *Yom Hadin*, yet Rosh Hashanah is nothing in *Tanach*. Instead the Yom Kippur mood moves backwards, and Rosh Hashanah becomes part of the *Yamim Nora'im*. The mood goes back even to Rosh Chodesh Elul, when we begin to blow the Shofar. And we begin reciting *selichot* a week **before**, so there's a lot of buildup to the judgment metaphor: *Rosh Hashanah/Yom Kippur*, a season of judgment and accountability.

We have to go before God, and the prayer captures this beautifully. It is the *Yom Hadin*. It is the ultimate Day of Judgment that takes place on high. There are two scenarios here, two sets. There is the human set, the set where we live, this *shul*, this *hazzan*, this rabbi, these *balebatim* in **real** time and space. And there is the **transcendent** court up there: God, angels, Shofars, open books, *chotam yad kol adam bo*, voices are heard, names are read, everybody trembles, and God sits, and we pass before God, and God metes out judgment to every human being. Where is this taking place? Up there. And we are down here. What is the impact of this prayer? The impact of this prayer is that the transcendent world of *Yom Hadin* and the real world in which you and I live become one. All of the Aggadah about Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur which we imagine takes place up there at this moment, enters into our world through this *piyyut* and becomes one. And that is why we cry. That is why we read this prayer with trepidation.

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Now, when my father read it with trepidation, it was because he really **believed** that this was taking place up there. My own sense is that it's not taking place up there, it's taking place down here. And either we are scooted up there, or they are scooted down here, but the two trials, the two days of judgment are fused and are taking place simultaneously. This is tremendously important - this is the key I think to understanding great ritual. What happens at *Sheva Brachot*? The *gan eden* where God performs Adam and Eve's wedding and the wedding of this couple become one. What happens at the end of the Passover Seder? Eliyahu enters the room, and the Exodus and my own re-enactment of the Exodus become one. **The two worlds fuse.**

Now, the trouble with these two worlds fusing is that they are not really one. It's just an imaginative fusing, **it's a sort of mythic fusing**, if you will. And what happens at the end of the Seder? We open the door. And why do we open the door? I think we open the door because opening the door is like saying, yes, we are redeemed from Egypt, mythically, theoretically, theologically. But in reality when you open the door, you see that the world is not redeemed and that people have not been liberated, and that even we are not liberated. It's like a return to history. That's what the breaking of the glass is at the end of the wedding. It's not *zecher lechurban*, it's a return to history. It's not remembering the *churban that* was, it symbolizes the *churban* that will be. In other words, we send the couple out into the real world. They come out from under the *chupah* and they're no longer in this mythic world of *Yirmiyahu* and *kol sason vekol simcha*. They're in the real world, and the real world is not redeemed yet, so we break the glass, we break the spell. We scoot the transcended world back to where it belongs and the couple comes back into history. This is I think what happens here. And this is what *teshuvah*, *tefillah*, *tzedakah* does, it brings us back from myth into history.

This whole understanding of the way in which mythic worlds and real world meet and fuse and then separate comes from an extraordinarily powerful article on the anthropology of religion by Clifford Geertz, who teaches at Princeton. The book is called *The Interpretation of Cultures*, specifically, chapter 4. The title of the chapter is "Religion as a Cultural System." Note the term: religion not as a theological system, but religion as a cultural system. How is it that communities create religious traditions? What is the role of the community in shaping what a religious position is going to be like? What is the role of human beings? It's religion not from the perspective of God, but religion from the perspective of human beings. How did religions evolve in the history of human communities? How did all of this happen?

Geertz discusses the relationship between the ritual and this transcendent world that religion creates, namely a world in which there's God and there are judges and the supreme court. What happens at great moments of ritual, he says, is that the transcendent world that religion paints and the real world of human beings fuse. They become one, which is what gives this transcendent world what he calls its "aura of factuality." My father believed that the world up there is *mamash*. On Rosh Hashanah/Yom Kippur he was terrified because what was happening was *mamash*. There is a God, and He's sitting on a big chair up there,

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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and the books are open, and angels are trembling, the Shofars are blowing, and they are reading my father's name! And the entire world, his life that he lived and the year that he had, etc., is up there. This was not fantasy for him.

Now, for me this is fantasy, but brilliant fantasy! And what does this *piyyut* do? It brings that world back down into *shul*, into a world where God is no longer sitting up there, God is sitting in *shul*. And the angels are in *shul*. And all of this is going on here in *shul*. And in the course of saying this *piyyut*, we undergo the transformation from fear and trembling to a sense of relief, which is exactly the transformation that I'm supposed to go through on Rosh Hashanah /Yom Kippur. I enter Rosh Hashanah with trepidation, I exit at the end of Yom Kippur with a sense of relief. How do I get from one to the other? Well, I think the turning point in the drama of that whole ten-day period is here. And I think that *teshuvah, utesfillah, utzedakah ma'avirin et ro'a hagezerah* says that the responsibility is not up there, **the responsibility is down here**. And what is expected of me? Nothing that is not familiar. Nothing that I'm not used to doing, but the normal things a Jew does: *teshuvah, tefillah, tzedakah*.

The vividness of the court scene is what I call fantasy. The fact that on this day we believe that we stand in judgment, and that God forgives us for the sins that we've committed in the past year, that is not fantasy. That, I believe, is *mamash*. That I believe. The court scene in which this takes place, I understand that to be fantasy. Now, I have to say that what I mean by describing it as a 'brilliant fantasy' doesn't for a moment diminish the power of the *piyyut*. On Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur when I say this, I am very much moved. And I accept it as metaphorically-and-poetically true. It's poetry, and poetry can be very, very true. It's not scientifically true, and it's not literally true, but it's poetically true.

And still, even though the metaphor is ultimately broken, and for whatever reason I come to the realization that none of this is *mamash*, I am still able to go back into the prayer - into Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur – and have it work for me. All I can tell you is that it does. Thank you.



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## Talmudic Debate about Hallel

by Professor Judith Hauptman

Chair: Hazzan Jack Chomsky

*Hazzan Jack Chomsky:*

Good morning, I'm Jack Chomsky, Cantor of Congregation Tifereth Israel in Columbus, Ohio. I am the chair of this morning's program and we are pleased to present Dr. Judith Hauptman. Professor Hauptman holds her BA from Barnard College of Columbia University and a Master of Arts and Ph.D. in Talmud from the Jewish Theological Seminary. She writes on Talmud, feminism and their points of intersection. Her recent book, which is now in its second printing, is *Rereading the Rabbis: A Woman's Voice*, widely available in major bookstores and Judaica bookstores, and brilliantly written. It's our great honor to have this presentation by Professor Hauptman.

*Professor Hauptman:*

Thank you. Just a word on the handout you've been given. In the front you have the Hebrew text, on the second page the English translation and on the third page both the Hebrew and English. The subject I've chosen for this morning is a very nice discussion about Hallel, something that we all *daven* all the time but just don't know the history of and the rules that are associated with it. I just want to say before I begin that I've taught this material in the past to various classes at JTS but I've never taught it to cantors - to musicians - and when I was preparing it different questions rose in my mind. In other words, when you prepare to teach people who know an awful lot about music, much more than I know about music, you think about different things in the course of your preparation. So, I invite you - this is an interactive session, this is not a lecture - I invite you to interact with me throughout, but particularly in the first part in the Mishnah.

I suppose you know that Hallel was recited in the Temple in Jerusalem. It is a set of Psalms 113 to 118. We'll talk a little bit about *chatsi hallel*, where we drop the first piece of Psalm 115 and 116, but for the moment think about Hallel as it was performed in the Temple. I've numbered the lines for easy reference, and I'm beginning with the Mishnah in Babylonian tractate Arachin, 10a. Feel free to follow on the page in Hebrew. Of course I'll read it in the original and comment in English, or you can follow on the second page in English.

In order to get to Hallel we have to get through some of this musical stuff. *Ein pochatin mei'esrim ve'achat teki'ah bamikdash, velo mosifin al arba'im ushmonah. Ein pochatin mishnei nevalin, velo mosifin al shishah. Ein pochatin mishnei chalilin, velo mosifin al shneim asar.* They never blew less than 21 blasts in the Temple, and never more than 48. They never played on less than 2 harps or on more than six, and never less than 2 flutes of more than 12.

That doesn't mean that one person knew how to play more than one musical instrument. Rashi points out that there were two Levites and each one had his own instrument and took care of both the singing and the playing. I'm going to assume that the greater the holiday the greater the number of musical instruments. You never had fewer than two *chalilim* playing in the *Bet Hamikdash* nor more than twelve. Today we talk about the *chalil* as being a recorder which I think is made out of wood, and all the information that I could gather was that it was a flute or pipe. Now, I don't know, maybe somebody can help

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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me - I don't know what the ancient *chalil* was made out of - was it made out of wood, was it not made out of wood? A reed, aha! -- that's actually very helpful because we're going to jump ahead in the Mishnah to line 9, the second word. *Velo hayah makeh be'abuv shel nechoshet, ela be'abuv shel kaneh, mipnel shekolo arev* 'and they did not play on a pipe of copper but on a reed pipe, since its sound was sweet'.

They say here they didn't play (*lehakot* is to bang when you play) on an *abuv* made out of copper but on an *abuv* made out of reed because its sound was sweet. It's strange that in line 3 they talk about the *chalil* and now continuing the very same statement they switched from the word *chalil* to the word *abuv* even though it seems that the Gamara says in any event you are talking about the same instrument.

Now, I know that *abuv* in modern Hebrew is oboe - so I looked up in my Talmudic dictionary to see if *abuv* also meant oboe, and in fact it translates as 'reed or flute'. And that's what it says here, it had to be made out of a reed. So, it seems to me - and I'm treading on very thin ice here with my musical knowledge - that the ancient instrument was made out of a reed. And *chalil*, the Hebrew word *chalal* means 'hollow' - so a *chalil* is a hollow reed.

I looked this up: *abuv*, which comes from the root *num- bet- vav*, 'to hollow out', means 'something hollow'.

### *Comment from the floor:*

*Abuv* means a double reed, and to produce an oboe sound on it you must have a mouthpiece, whereas on a flute you can blow straight into it. So that's the reason I'm sure there is a difference between the two.

### *Professor Hauptman:*

Oh, O.K. then it's possible that they are different, and although they are related, one may have evolved from another. I'm going to guess that the people who wrote these materials were not as knowledgeable musically as they might have been, and they're using the words interchangeably even though there are differences in these two instruments. Do you agree with that or do you not agree with that?

### *Comment from the floor:*

I think there really were two instruments.

### *Professor Hauptman:*

Oh, I agree with you, but I'm saying that to the people who wrote this they are the same instrument. O.K. now I'm going to press your Talmudic knowledge - when was the Mishnah written? Relative to the Temple - 200 C.E. O.K., when was the Temple destroyed? 70 C.E. Even though the materials evolved over time, the final compilation is in the year 200. I'm going to guess that the musical knowledge of instruments in the Temple faded a bit, and the Tanna'm lost a bit of precision in describing the musical instruments over time and they are implying there were two different instruments which are related. They are implying that they are the same only out of lack of precision.

One other thing I did, was I took out my Webster's dictionary and I looked up the word oboe because I wanted to see what I could get and it said that the root of the modern o-b-o-e is from the Italian or French, hautbois. Haut is high and bois is boy: highboy. Now I suspect that *abuv* is clearly an oboe. Avraham Even-Shoshan's *Millon Chadash* takes the

word oboe and says it comes from the Arabic. So it seems to me that we have now located in Semitic languages the origin that the word *abuv* is oboe.

O.K., having said all that, we're now going to go back to some of the lines we skipped. It said that there were two *chalilim* at minimum, twelve at most. Now in the middle of line 5 the following statement is made: *uvishneim asar yom bashanah hechalil makeh lifnei hamizbe'ach* 'on 12 days in the year the flute was played before the altar'.

O.K. I don't know where they generally played the flute. What I do know is the *levi'yim* stood on steps. I don't have a diagram of the Temple in front of me, but the first large court that you entered was called *ezrat nashim*. Now a lot of people think that *ezrat nashim* means that it was for the women, but that is simply not true. The large gallery - it's almost half the Temple - is called *ezrat nashim* because women and men entered it. Everybody had to pass through it on your way in, but women could go no further. So that's why it's called *ezrat nashim*. Then there's a slice over here called *ezrat yisrael* because men could go up the steps from the *ezrat nashim* into the *ezrat yisrael* and men could do whatever their sacrificial activities were there. Beyond *ezrat yisrael* is the *ezrat kohanim*, only the *kohanim* could do the real sacrificial work in the *ezrat kohanim*.

Now where was the music taking place in the Temple? The steps leading up from *ezrat nashim* to *ezrat yisrael* - I think it was 15 steps, that's where the *leviyim* stood, - they sang and played musical instruments. So, the Mishnah's statement is apparently some variation of standard practice. There are 12 days during the year when the *chalil* is played near the altar where the sacrifices are made. And now comes a list, and this list is very important for us. So, I'm going to read it: Line 6.

*Bishchitat pesach rishon*- they played the *chalil* when they slaughtered on the 15th of Nissan, that's *Pesach Rishon*. If you missed *Pesach Rishon* because you were ritually impure you could come and do it a month later on *Pesach Sheini* and then too you had the *chalil* played. *B'yom tov rishon shel pesach* 'the first day of Pesach' - the day itself, not the night before when they did the slaughtering or the afternoon before. On the first day of Pesach they played the *chalil* near the altar. *B'yom tov shel atzeret u'vishmonat yemei hachag*. O.K., what is *atzeret* and what is *chag*? *Atzeret* sounds like *shemini atzeret* but by process of elimination it can't be because then what would *shemonat yemei hachag* be. So *atzeret* is Shavuot and *hachag* is Sukkot. The rabbis of the Mishnah and the Talmud had different names for these holidays. Sukkot is the holiday, the celebration because Sukkot was truly the major celebration in the Temple. I could go into the *lulav* and the *aravot* and the *simchat bet hashoevah* or Water Libation - it goes on and on. The *chag* was the major celebration. Before I go on, let me go back and ask you why is Shavuot called *atzeret*?

*Comment from the floor:*

It's the end of the *Pesach*.

*Professor Hauptman:*

Yes, it's the end of Pesach, just as Shemini Atzeret is the culmination of the Sukkot celebration, Shavuot is a culmination. So these are the days of the year when the flute is played at the altar in the Temple, and it's really a list of Jewish holidays.

We're going to stop looking at the Mishnah now and we're going to go down to the Gemara because this is the segue into Hallel. I begin on line 36: *mai shna hanei* 'why are these days singled out'? Why did the Mishnah single out these twelve days during the year

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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for the *chalil* to play near the altar? The Gemara asks this question and it immediately answers its own question: *ho'il ve'yachid gomer bahan et hahelel*. These days have special musical accompaniment at the altar because these are the days each individual is required to finish the entire Hallel. These are the days on which full Hallel is recited, therefore these days are special, therefore these days have special musical accompaniment going back to the time of the Temple.

And, there's more information, you're going to see another list: *de'amar rabi yochanan mishum rabi shimon ben yehotzadak*. Rabbi Yochanan is one of the major speakers in the Babylonian Talmud but he lives in *Eretz Yisrael* so he's equally as important in the Jerusalem Talmud except that most of the time we study the Babylonian Talmud and he's citing a tradition in the name of a very early rabbi, Shimon ben Yehotzadak from the time of the Mishnah. And he lists the days on which you finish the Hallel: *shmonah asar yamin shehayachid gomer bahan et hahelel*. There are 18 days during the year that we say the full Hallel: *shmonah yemei hachag* '8 days of *Sukkot*', *shmonah yemei chanukah*; '8 days of Chanukah'; (which is brand new, you didn't see that in the Mishnah) *yom tov shel rishon shel pesach*, 'the first day of Pesach' (and this only of course in *Eretz Yisrael*); *v'yom tov shel atzeret* 'the feast day of Shavuot'; *uvagola esrim ve'echad* and '21 outside of Israel'. This is not that uncommon, for a rabbi from *Eretz Yisrael* to tell you what you should do outside of *Eretz Yisrael* because this is the Babylonian Talmud and he provides a second list: *tish'ah yemei hachag* 'the 9 days of *Sukkot*' - including 7 days of *Sukkot*, 1 day of *Shmini Atzeret*, and *Simchat Torah* - all those days have Hallel. The two days - *shnei yamim tovim shel pesach* - 'the first two days of Pesach'; *shnei yamim tovim shel atzeret* and 'the two days of Shavuot'.

All right, we've gotten a lot of information and soon we're going to have give and take, but let's just talk about these numbers if you can keep everything straight. The Mishnah had 12 days of playing the flute near the altar. Rabbi Yochanan has 18 days of Hallel for *Eretz Yisrael*. Now, what got added and what dropped, how do the numbers work out? I want to do all this now because we're not going to come back to it. So, what happened when we went from days to 18?

*Comment from the floor:*

We added Chanukah.

*Professor Hauptman:*

We added Chanukah. So that should have been up to 20, O.K. - why is Chanukah not in the Mishnah?

*Comment from the floor:*

Because it's later.

*Professor Hauptman:*

Because it's later, yes. The Mishnah happened after Chanukah, but the Mishnah is talking about what they did in the Temple. The Mishnah is talking about the days on which they had special sacrifices in the Temple, and special sacrifices come out of the Torah. So, even if Chanukah had already happened, which it did of course, by the time of the Mishnah, you don't add sacrifices. Of course I'm throwing a lot of dates around now. There's the



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Temple sacrifices coming out of the Torah, we've got the Temple being destroyed in 70 and the Mishnah being written in 200. All right, so Chanukah's not in the Mishnah because as Rashi says, there's no special sacrifice prescribed in the Torah for Chanukah. So, that would bring us up to 20.

*Comment from the floor:*

They dropped *pesach sheini*.

*Professor Hauptman:*

They dropped *pesach sheini*, because once you no longer have a Temple, you no longer have *pesach sheini*. But that brings us down to 19, so where do we get down to 18? There were two things here - you played the *chalil* near the altar when you slaughtered the *pesach rishon* in Nissan or if you slaughtered *pesach sheini* in Iyyar. But both *pesach rishon* and *pesach sheini* are dropped in the time of Rabbi Yochanan who is talking about individuals saying *Hallel* in *shul*, whereas the Mishnah is talking about playing the flute in the Temple. All right, those details are not so important but if anybody were going to ask me about the discrepancies in numbers here, that's the answer.

*Comment from the floor:*

When you mention the nine days referring to Sukkot, actually in this time it's really two days of Shemini Atzeret, it's not really Simchat Torah yet.

*Professor Hauptman:*

That's right, thank you for the correction. In the *Gola* we have the first two days of Sukkot, then days 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, are *chol hamo'eid shel sukkot* and then 8 and 9 are the last two days - which are Shemini Atzeret, prior to when we had Simchat Torah. The 9th day was transformed in the medieval period into Simchat Torah. Thank you, that's an important correction.

All right, now we continue with the debate. The Gemara now is trying to understand why on certain days you recite the *Hallel* and other days you don't recite the *Hallel*. And I'm beginning at the very bottom of the page, line 44, the line before the bottom. *Mai shna bechag de'amrinan kol yoma umai shna bepesach delo amrinan kol yoma* 'why is it that on the *chag*, on Sukkot, we recite the *Hallel* every day?' in other words we're leaving our musical instrument model because we have moved into the post-Temple period. Why is it that on Sukkot we recite *Hallel* every single day, whereas on Pesach we do not recite *Hallel* every single day? Now again, forget *chatzi hallel* for the moment - when it says that "on Pesach we don't say *Hallel* every single day," here in the *gola* all those days of Pesach are called "not saying *Hallel*" for the purposes of this *sugya*. Now here's a point where we can interact a little bit - why is it that we do not say *Hallel* or not say a full *Hallel* (to be more accurate) on the rest of the days of Pesach?

*Comment from the floor:*

I believe it has to do with, while we were happy that we were delivered, there was death and destruction around us for the first born in Egypt, and I think that we didn't want to rejoice at the suffering of the first borns around us.

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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*Professor Hauptman:*

That is true, but for some strange reason that does not appear in this *sugya*. They are trying to derive rules here for when you say Hallel and when you don't say Hallel and they have a different answer. But you're going to see a variation of what you just said, which is correct, coming up a little bit later in the *sugya*. O.K., I have other opinions, yes -

*Comment from the floor:*

Because on Sukkot the sacrifice is changed every day, but on Pesach they did not.

*Professor Hauptman:*

O.K., that's going to be the answer given here in the Gemara: *bechag chalukin bekorbenoteihen, bepesach ein chalukin bekorbenoteihen*, 'on Sukkot, each successive day has a different set of sacrifices and on Pesach you don't have a different set of sacrifices each successive day'. Let's just go over this and make this clear. We're going to do the math right now. On the first day of Sukkot, how many bulls were offered? Thirteen, O.K., and then on the second day?

*Comment from the floor:*

Fourteen.

*Professor Hauptman:*

No, no, no - we'd go bankrupt if we went from 13 to 14 to 15 to 16 - this is the amazing thing. On the first day of Sukkot 13 sacrifices. On the second day of Sukkot 12. On the third day, 11. On the fourth day 10. Now, please go back to 10th grade math and add  $13+12+11+10+9+8+7$ . The totality of sacrifices offered on Sukkot, if you add up that decreasing sequence, is 70. And why 70?

Sukkot is our most universal holiday. It is not particularistic like Pesach, when we talk about us leaving Egypt; or Shavuot, will we get the Torah. But on Sukkot we're praying for rain and for the well-being of the entire world, and the Haftarah reflects that. It's the one with Solomon dedicating the Temple and praying for all the nations of the world and they're all going to come to Jerusalem and they're all going to worship there, and there's a similar one on the second day of Shemini Atzeret. If you look at the various Haftarat on Sukkot you're going to discover that they all have Universalist themes. So, the point here is that each day of Sukkot is actually a brand new holiday and therefore it merits a Hallel of its own, whereas Pesach is one drawn out holiday. And therefore, according to this, the first day of Pesach merits a Hallel and the succeeding days are just continuation of the first day and they don't merit their own Hallel. O.K., they set this up as a principle and what's going to be fun about this *sugya* is they set up a principle thinking you could then have a predictive quality. But if you just remember this principle, that on any day during the Jewish year that has its own distinctive set of sacrifices you say Hallel, you'd get into trouble. Let's see - can you think of a day during the Jewish year that has its own distinctive set of sacrifices and yet it does not have Hallel? Because you'll immediately see why this rule is far from perfect.

*Comment from the floor:*

Shabbat

*Professor Hauptman:*

Shabbat, O.K. and the *sugya* then says if the criterion for saying Hallel is distinctive sacrifices, Shabbat has distinctive sacrifices. Therefore, one should say Hallel on Shabbat. And the answer given is *lo ikrei mo'eid*; [Shabbat] is not called *mo'eid*. So now we've introduced a second criterion. You have to have distinctive sacrifices it has to be an 'appointed time', usually associated with the celebration of some special event. Shabbat happens all the time, so it's not called *mo'eid*. So now we're kind of putting ourselves on our back and saying, O.K. any day in the Jewish year that is both called *mo'eid* and has a distinctive set of sacrifices - that's how you can remember if there's Hallel.

But there are two ways of going about it. You can either memorize a long list, which I think is pretty hard, or you can have one or two criteria and you can just always spit out the answer by applying the criteria. So, they've developed two criteria - still not there yet, because they say in Line 3: *rosh chochesh de'ikrei mo'eid, leima* 'on Rosh Chodesh, which is called a *mo'eid*, let us say [Hallel]'. So, does Rosh Chodesh have a distinctive set of sacrifices? Of course Rosh Chodesh has a distinctive set of sacrifices. We should be saying Hallel on Rosh Chodesh. Now, again, I don't want to confuse anybody here, we do not say a full Hallel on Rosh Chodesh, and for the purposes of this *sugya* if it's not full it's called 'not saying Hallel'.

We should be saying it and yet, we all know we don't. So, now they add a third criterion at the end of Line 4: *lo ikdish ba'asiyat melachah* '[Rosh Chodesh] is not sanctified by refraining from doing work'. Except that women are not supposed to work - or at least do certain kinds of work - on Rosh Chodesh. But that's definitely not what's being referred to here.

So now we think we have it. If we've got a distinctive set of sacrifices and if it's called a *mo'eid* and if it's a day on which you're not allowed to work, that defines the list of days during the Jewish year when you say Hallel. We think we're there, but we're going to see in a moment we're not quite there. Before we get to the next line we have to run through a little verse here, which is a charming verse. Line 5, a *pasuk* from Isaiah: *hashir yihyeh lachem keleil hitkadeish chag* 'you shall have a song in the night when a feast is hallowed'. But the rabbis do not read verses according to this simple meaning. The rabbis go on and say: *lailah hamekudash lechag ta'un shirah, veshe'ein mekudash lechag ein ta'un shirah*. *Shirah* is a synonym for Hallel. They use the word Hallel to describe Hallel, and they also use the word *shirah*, which of course tells you right away this is a musical accompaniment, or singing. They say when a holiday is sanctified by not doing work - *ta'u'n shirah* - it requires Hallel. If it's a day that's not sanctified by refraining from work, you don't do Hallel.

I'm summing up and saying the argument at the moment is - if you have a day with special *korbanot*, that's called *mo'eid*, and is *ikdish ba'asiyat melachah*, you would think you are going to say Hallel. It would seem that way yet now they say no. Line 7: *rosh hashanah, veyom hakippurim de'ikru mo'eid ve'ikdush ba'asiyat melachah, leima* 'on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, that are called *mo'eid* and sanctified by the prohibition of labor, we should say Hallel'.

I think you will all see the cumulative nature of the *sugya*. If you acquire this basic vocabulary, *ikdish ba'asiyat melachah* - and so on - in the first 5 or 6 lines, you can kind of go on by yourselves. It's also a fun *sugya* because if I weren't standing here doing with you, you could probably spin it all out on your own. If I assigned you to work this out in pairs, you'd sit here and say uhuh, criteria number 1, criteria number 2, and you'd come up with all

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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the questions. Maybe your answers would differ, but you would work it out on your own. However, we're working it out together, and what's being said here is Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur fit the criteria: they are called a *mo'eid*; you can't work on them; they have a distinctive set of sacrifices. Therefore, *leima*, let's say Hallel. Of course, we know we don't. But, by the predictive quality of those rules we should be saying Hallel.

And now we come to the answer. *De'amar rabi abahu* 'because Rabbi Abahu said the following': *amru mal'achei hashareit lifnei hakadosh baruch hu ribono shel olam, mipnei mah ein yisrael omrim shirah lefanecha berosh hashanah uveyom hakippurim* - 'the ministering angels said before G-d, "Master of the Universe, how come on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur Jews do not recite Hallel before you?"' What is the assumption of the ministering angels here? Of course as cantors you probably are delighted there is one less thing to do on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. But, not looking at it from the perspective of cantors, what would be the underlying reason to say Hallel on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur?

*Comment from the floor:*

It's *Yom Tov*?

*Professor Hauptman*

It's *Yom Tov*, but now go to the essence of Hallel.

*Comment from the floor:*

It's praise.

*Professor Hauptman:*

It's praise. Why would you want to praise G-d on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur? I'm now raising counter-argument here.

*Comment from the floor:*

You're asking for mercy.

*Professor Hauptman:*

You're asking for mercy. O.K., you come before somebody, you're throwing yourself down and are going to plead for mercy - praise him already. But the question is - you're going to see a different logic here, but I want you to understand the logic of the angels. So the angels come before G-d, according to Rabbi Abahu and say how can we not say Hallel on these days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur? In the Torah, what is the nature of Yom Kippur? *Ve'initem et naftoteichem*, we're to afflict ourselves on Yom Kippur. The very name Yom Kippur means Day of Atonement - so we've got some sense of it. And what is Rosh Hashanah - *yom teruah* - so we know it's a day of blowing the Shofar. The point that I wanted to make is the whole notion of Rosh Hashanah initiating a ten-day period of introspection leading to repentance. That is actually a rabbinic innovation. In those days it's entirely possible that it was a popular development. It's entirely possible that the people themselves, prior to Yom Kippur, began to initiate some kind of process of *teshuva*. You don't just fall into Yom Kippur. Even if the people didn't initiate it, the written record of Rosh Hashanah as a *yom hadin* (Day of Judgement) is right there in the Mishnah for me, so

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I'm therefore crediting the Rabbis.

I'll tell you why I'm sensitive on this point. You know that I spend an awful lot of time looking into the issue of women in Judaism, women in the rabbinic period in particular and in this book that I just wrote I actually credit the rabbis with ameliorating the status of women in Judaism. People often say to me, how can you credit those misogynists with improving women's status in marriage, in inheritance, even in divorce? Well, in divorce they left a lot to be done, how can I credit them? They were actually under enormous pressure from the people. In other words women in particular -- and men -- must have pressured the rabbis to change the Jewish law, most likely to bring Jewish law up to the level where the Aramaic common law was, or the Greco-Roman civilization was, and so on. I get criticized for this and my answer is that we don't have a record. The only record we have of changes in Jewish law in that period of time comes to us off the pages of the Mishnah and the Gemara and those were written by the rabbis and in those works they take credit for the changes that they introduced. If they were whipped into these changes because women were furious with them because of divorce disabilities, that's very interesting. But until I have that information, I have nobody else to credit except those rabbis. I give the divorce example because I do have evidence right in the Gemara, which is interesting because the rabbis themselves in the Gemara say that women were going elsewhere to the gentile courts to get themselves divorces because the rabbis were insensitive to the possibility of women initiating divorce, and to stop women from going elsewhere they instituted this rule and that rule and so on. (You can read about it in my book.) Aside from a rare instance of that sort, I have nobody else to credit, aside from the rabbis. So, I think until we uncover a wonderful document - you know, more Dead Sea Scrolls where a woman who fled and buried her Ketubah in one of those caves near the Dead Sea - until we have information that will change the picture, I will credit the rabbis. So, returning to this now.

The angels ask G-d, "How come the Jews at this moment when you'd think they'd be praising You, aren't praising You?" And on Line 12: - *amar lahen* 'G-d said to them'. *Efshar melech yoshev al kisei hadin vesifrei chayim vesifrei meitim petuchin lefanav veiyisrael omrim shirah lefanav*. 'Do you think it's possible that the King will sit on the Seat of Judgement with the Book of Life and the Book of Death open in front of Him and Israel will sing before Him?' O.K., you tell me what this answer means. Because it's a different mindset. The angels are right, but then G-d is right. And G-d has the last word, of course. But what is G-d saying? Why, according to Rabbi Abahu, who puts his words into G-d's mouth, why do we not say Hallel on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur?

*Comment from the floor:*

Because these are really the Days of Awe, you're alluding to the King's power, and in that sense the Hallel is contrary to that view.

*Professor Hauptman:*

Yes, if we could even use the word frivolous, although I hesitate to... but you're right, you're right... In other words, if you have a continuum here, that goes from dread (*Yom Hadin*) to frivolity (*Simchat Torah*) - on the Days of Awe, we want to be on the dread end of the continuum, not on the frivolity end, and Hallel is somewhere closer to frivolity than it is to dread. So, it's simply inappropriate, as nice as is the content of Hallel, and as beautiful as all that musical accompaniment. I think the detail I left out before was we talked about the

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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flute playing near the altar, but I neglected to mention to you is that when the flute played near the altar on all those days listed in the Mishnah, what were the Levites doing? They were standing on the steps and singing the Hallel. So, (sometimes you forget the most important thing) we went into the musical instruments, but the purpose of the musical instruments was to accompany the singing of the Hallel.

So, I'm now continuing with line 15 - brand new question. We had the three criteria: *chalukin bekorbenoteihen*; it's called a *mo'eid*; and you're forbidden to do work, and you think you've got it down now and we've got all those days figured out, and now they come up with a new question. Line 15: *vehai chamikah delo hachi velo hachi veka'amar*, meaning Oy! we set up these criteria, but look - out there there's Chanukah. Now, does Chanukah have its own *korbanot*? No, it has no special sacrifices. Is it called a *mo'eid*? No. Is it forbidden to do work? No. Do we say Hallel? Yes. So, what have we accomplished so far? Very little, right? It's an amazing *sugya* because - I want to tell you how many days are there where we recite Hallel - they said 18- 21...whatever it is - I'll memorize them. Leave me alone with all these complicated rules - it's going to be harder for me to remember the rules by the time I'm done, then to simply commit this to memory. But, by the way again, I'm talking to you as if you doubt the importance of Talmudic discussion, O.K. Because I raise the question. But, the answer of course is by going through all this give and take - which we have a little bit more of before we finish - even if you gain nothing - even if you can say in the end "leave me alone" or "I'll just remember the days on which I say Hallel," you will have gained deeper understanding of the reasons for saying Hallel on the days you do and not saying Hallel on the days you don't. That is going to be the educational value for all of this. Do not think for a moment you're going to have a little calendar in your pocket to pull out, don't think you're going to have to rely on that, don't think you're going to get a set of rules here.

All right, so the question on Chanukah is, it violates every one of those rules and still we say Hallel. And line 16 says the reason is - *meshum nisa* - because Chanukah celebrates a miracle. This is your fourth criterion. And this is not going to work, because now it says *purim de'ika nisa leima* 'on Purim, when there was a miracle, let us say [Hallel]'. But we don't.

*Comment from the floor:*

Isn't Chanukah really sort of a *sukkot sheini*?

*Professor Hauptman:*

Yes, yes... you're too sophisticated - you just came out of JTS - leave this room... no, of course - yes. You know the real reason we say Hallel on Chanukah is that historically speaking the Macabees, missed Sukkot during the years of the Hasmonean revolt and then when they finally gained control and won the rebellion they observed Sukkot late, with *lulav* and *etrog* - it's an amazing detail. And even the length of it, and its Temple dedication ceremony. There are so many connections between Chanukah and Sukkot, that of course it's a *chag sukkot sheini*. But that's not on the table right now.

*Comment from the floor:*

But that's the reason for the Hallel.

*Professor Hauptman:*

Yes, but it doesn't mean there were sacrifices. In this *sugya* they are saying that Hallel on Chanukah is because of the *nes* - which gets them into trouble, because then, what do we do about Purim? There's no Hallel, but there should be Hallel because Purim is equally a *nes*. But let me continue. The question is why don't we say Hallel on Purim? We should be, because it's a miracle. *Amar rabi yitzchak*, line 17. *Lefi she'ein omrim shirah al nes sheb'chutzah la'aretz*. Political point here. The *nes purim* happened in Persia, it did not happen in *Eretz Yisrael*, therefore no Hallel. Now, don't look ahead... what's the very next question you have to ask?

*Comment from the floor:*

Pesach, Pesach!

*Professor Hauptman:*

Pesach! Pesach celebrates a *nes* outside of Israel, and we do say Hallel. You see, there's danger in trying to set up rules and that's exactly what they're going to say now on line 19: *markif lah rav Nachman bar yitzchak, veharei yetsi'at mitsrayim denes sheb'chutzah la'aretz hu ve'amrinan hallel*. You can give me a criterion that when there's a *nes* only in *Eretz Yisrael* - you say Hallel. That's to justify no Hallel on Purim. Well, you know, you've boxed yourself in here and you can get tongue-tied because we've got Pesach were we do have a *nes* and we do say Hallel but the *nes* is outside of *Eretz Yisrael*, and that goes against the rules.

*Comment from the floor:*

But that was a situation before we could have possibly had *nisim* in *Eretz Yisrael* because we hadn't yet entered the land.

*Professor Hauptman:*

That's good... that's excellent. So the *sugya* goes on and says on Line 20: *kidetanya, ad shelo nichnesu yisrael la'aretz huchsheru kol ha'aratsot lomar shirah, mishenichnesu la'aretz lo huchsheru kol aratzot lomar shirah*. 'Up until the time the Jews entered the land of Israel, all lands in which miracles happened were fit to say *shirah*'. In other words, if a *nes* happened to the Jewish people prior to the time that they first entered Israel, you could say Hallel on such a miracle. Of course, how many *nisim* happened to the Jewish people prior to the time - are there any? Aside from *yetziat mitsrayim* was there any *nes* that happened to the Jewish people before they entered the land of Israel? Oh, the Manna maybe, except we don't say Hallel for that. But, they're saying up until that time you could say Hallel on a *nes* that happened outside of Israel. Once we Jews entered Israel, *nisim* which happened outside the land of Israel were no longer fit for saying Hallel. All right, that talks us out the Pesach problem.

Now, there are a few more lines to the *sugya*... but let me just tell you, in a sense the *sugya* has ended right here because they've now given you this set of rules: if its *chaluk bekorbanot*, *ikri mo'eid* and *ikdush ba'asiyat melachah* you do say Hallel. And there are other days which don't have those qualities but which have a *nes*, and still you say Hallel, but the *nes* has to have been in *Eretz Yisrael*. That's kind of where all this ended up. So you have to remember those five things and I still claim it's easier not to remember any of these

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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rules, just remember the list of Rabbi Yochanan, he just gives you a list, he doesn't give you any explanations.

But now, let's just finish this through because there are one or two more points they want to make here.

*Comment from the floor:*

How about on *Yom Ha'atzma'ut*?

*Professor Hauptman:*

Oh, *Yom Ha'atzma'ut*...you know, that is a wonderful point you've just raised. What you have just pointed out is the importance of criteria. Because I'm standing here making fun of rules and saying just memorize a list. But what you're saying is - should a day arise in the future on which we are contemplating saying Hallel, I need some guidelines. And here we've got the guidelines. So let's talk about *Yom Ha'atzma'ut* right now. According to all of this, do we say Hallel on *Yom Ha'atzma'ut* or don't we say? It certainly fits the guidelines -

*Comment from the floor:*

The chief Rabbi in Israel said, yes you may say it, but without a *b'rachah*, which means it's not quite kosher.

*Comment from the floor:*

But they'll insert the prayer anyway.

*Professor Hauptman:*

Yes, we'll have the *Al Hanisim* - that's excellent. So you're saying that by the criteria of this *sugya* - we have two columns of the *sugya*. We're looking at the Chanukah/ Purim column right now and we're saying that all we need for Hallel today is a *nes be' Eretz Yisrael* (period). We don't need *ikdush ba'asiyat melachah* and *chaluk bekorbanot*, etc. And there you have it. As long as we are willing to call *Yom Ha'atzmaut* a *nes*, which we are because of the *Al Hanisim*, then we say *Yom Ha'atzma'ut* with a *b'rachah*. So, you've actually just redeemed the *sugya* - I mean I redeemed it in my own way but you've given a more redemptive quality to the *sugya* because who knows what will be in the future.

*Comment from the floor:*

It's as if they understood what might be in the future.

*Professor Hauptman:*

I think you're right, I absolutely think you're right. One of the reasons they may have gone through all of this is to possibly anticipate future issues. By the way, *Yom Yerushalayim* comes up as a question, too. And I don't remember now - do we or don't we say Hallel on *Yom Yerushalayim*? I think *Siddur Sim Shalom* came out after *Yom Yerushalayim*, but it may have been too new to address the question.

*Comment from the floor:*

It says in *Siddur Sim Shalom* that some congregations say Hallel on *Yom Yerushalayim*.



*Professor Hauptman:*

What it all boils down to is how do we define a miracle? That gets a little bit more complicated. In other words, we know the rules for Hallel now, but the question is ... is regaining Jerusalem a miracle or not? If you ask me – yes.

But now - I've got just five minutes. So let me continue on Line 22: *rav nachman amar*. We're still on the question of shouldn't we be saying Hallel on Purim or why don't we say Hallel on Purim and there are a couple of other answers here. *Kriyata zuhi halilah*. *Kriyata* (reading) is *kriyat hamegillah* (Book of Esther) and he's saying you don't need Hallel on Purim. In theory you could say Hallel on Purim but you don't need to, it'd be redundant because we read the Megillah. And what is the Megillah if not thanking G-d for our salvation because after all, what are the psalms in Hallel all about, think of them, they're personal. They're saying "thank G-d for saving me" *odecha ki anitani*, it's all thanks for personal salvation. And so on Purim we read the Megillah which tells the whole story of the salvation of the Jews of Persia.

*Comment from the floor:*

But, G-d's never mentioned, so how can it be praising G-d for salvation?

*Professor Hauptman:*

But they did find G-d somewhere: *revach vehatsalah ya'amod lay'hudim mimakom acher* [Mordechai to Esther.] 'for if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise to the Jews from another place' [*makom* being a pseudonym for G-d]. But you're right, you're absolutely right... the Megillah does not mention G-d. But the fact that Jews read the Megillah on Purim is a way of saying that we're thanking G-d for saving us. That's what he's saying here. But, your point is very well taken.

And now Raba has a different point, which applies to us here in the *Gola*. *Raba amar* - and these are three opinions all of which disagree with each other, at least in part. Raba says - *bishlama hatam* 'very well over there'. *Yetzi'at mitzrayim halalu, avdei adonai velo avdei par'oh*. When the Jews left Egypt and they begin the first psalm of Hallel with 'praise the Lord, you servants of G-d', it made sense: you left Egypt to call Jews *avdei hashem* because we were no longer *avdei paro* 'servants of Pharaoh'. It was a clean break. We left Egypt where Pharaoh was worshipped. We now worship G-d. Clean break. But *hacha* meaning 'here', where is here?

*Comment from the floor:*

Bavel.

*Professor Hauptman:*

Yes, Raba is saying, here in Babylonia when we say *halelu avdei adonai velo avdei par'oh*; (praise the Lord, ye servants of the Lord'), does that imply we are not the servants of Ahaseurus (*velo avdei achashuerosh*)? No it doesn't: *akatei avdei achashuerosh anan* (*akatei* means *aduyin*) 'we are still the servants of Ahaseurus! This is a very cynical comment about the life of the Jew outside of *Eretz Yisrael*: we are still in the *Gola*, be it a Ahaseurus' *Gola*. By the way, Raba did not live at the time of Ahaseurus - but Ahaseurus is the generic king of

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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Babylonia, Persia, whatever you want to call it, and he's saying we *Gola* Jews are never totally free. And therefore when we have Purim we celebrate, but you really can't say Hallel on Purim because it wasn't a complete redemption. It was only for we Jews who still live in Persia or Babylonian diaspora, it's not a complete redemption. That's an alternative way of looking at why we don't say Hallel on Purim.

And now, the last two lines. So we have three different views, I won't repeat them because I've got only a moment to go. *Ulerav nachman de'amar kriyata zu hi halilah* 'as for Rav Nachman', this is a question against Rav Nachman who said that reading the Megillah is like reciting Hallel. That is a problem, and I'm just wondering if it's not exactly the problem that we raised before. When Rav Nachman says that reading the Megillah is like reciting Hallel, he is actually saying that you do say Hallel on Purim, but it has another name. It has different words. It's not the same Hallel that you say on all other holidays. It's a slightly different Hallel. It happens to be *Megillat Esther* but he's kind of saying you do say Hallel on Purim and he shouldn't be saying that because we read in a Beraita (an earlier source) that you don't say Hallel if the *nes* took place outside of Israel. So, Rav Nachman says: O.K., we don't say Hallel but we read the Megillah in place of Hallel. But we're zapping him now and saying, how can you even use the word Hallel in your answer on Purim because it was a *nes* outside of *Eretz Yisrael*! You shouldn't be saying Hallel on Purim. You shouldn't be saying Hallel or a surrogate Hallel at all.

And the final point of the *sugya* is – *mishenichnesu la'aretz lo huchsheru kol aratzot lomar shirah; keivan shegalu, chazru leheteiran harishon*. This is also somewhat of a 'down' statement. There are stages - before we entered Israel you could say Hallel on a miracle that happened anywhere. Once we entered Israel, if the miracle took place outside Israel you couldn't say Hallel on it. And once we were exiled from Israel - what happened? What's *chazru leheteiran harishon* 'they returned to their original permission'? Once we were exiled we could again say Hallel on a *nes* that happened outside of Israel - and that supports Raba.

And now, let's just wrap up everything we've done here today. We talked about the musical instruments in the Temple, the twelve days on which they played musical instruments, and we didn't have to talk about Chanukah because Chanukah did not have special sacrifices in the Temple. So twelve made a lot of sense and those were the twelve Hallel--or musical-- days in the Temple. Then we came to Rabbi Yochanan who gave us 18/21 days for saying Hallel, basically by adding Chanukah and dropping out those one or two slaughtering-animals days. O.K., if we're looking for sensitivity for animals, there we have it. Not really in a very big way. Rabbi Yochanan gave us that information and in a sense you could have closed the books and gone home as soon as Rabbi Yochanan gave you the information. Because that's all you needed to know, and the interesting thing is that aside from *Yom Ha'atza'ut* and possibly *Yom Yerushalayim* those are precisely the rules that are still in effect today. Nothing has changed. You say Hallel on Pesach, but Rabbi Yochanan is still right.

And then they come along – they try to figure out criteria for Hallel and they come up with the parallel columns, the three qualities which cover Sukkot and Pesach. And the *nes* covers Chanukah and explains why it doesn't cover Purim. Purim has its own answer - it's *nes sheb'chutz la'aretz*. But the wonderful quality of these rules is that you can apply them into the future. And that's basically where the *sugya* ends and then you have a couple of explanations about why we don't say Hallel on Purim.

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But coming back to *chatsi hallel* - where did all that come in? First of all, please note that in this *sugya* there is the assumption that there's no such thing as *chatsi hallel*. This is *Masechet Arachin*, *eirech* is a vow of 'value'. *Masechet Arachin* - unless someone here can tell me otherwise, is never studied. Its not one of those 'hot' *masechtor* like *kiddushin*, *ketubot* or even *Bava Metz'a* that out there in the yeshivas and in the seminaries we study. *Arachin* vows a value which we don't have anymore and it's not a terribly interesting *masechta*. But this piece just happened to pop up here in conjunction with talking about Temple procedures. And the point I was going to make is *chatsi hallel*, which is talked about in *Ta'anit*. *Ta'anit* has a lot of stories about rabbis in it, and in *Ta'anit* it says that Rav happened to visit a certain town in Babylonia and it was Rosh Chodesh. You know the story, he saw the people sing Hallel, and he was aghast that they were saying Hallel but he kept quiet. In other words, he didn't blurt out anything. He held his peace for a moment. And then he saw *shehayu medalgim* 'that they were skipping', meaning they were leaving out those verses at the beginning of Psalms 115-116. And then he realized that *minhag avoteihem bideihem* - that they had a tradition of saying - on Rosh Chodesh and Pesach - part of Hallel, not the complete Hallel. And he kept quiet.

Talking about who changes Jewish law in life and ritual, *chatsi hallel* is something that the people invented, and I think I can understand that. I happen to like Hallel very much. My Cantor knows that I often come to Shul so late that I don't catch her saying Hallel. But in my heart I always want to be there for Hallel because I think it is one of the most beautiful parts of the service. So maybe, just maybe the reason that people added Hallel on Rosh Chodesh - although you do go to work so not too many of us get there unless it falls on Shabbat - there are more days of Hallel during the year on which you can sing and listen to your *Hazzan* as a result of *chatsi hallel*, which the people instituted, then there would have been otherwise. So, I would like to believe - talking to you people now, that *chatsi hallel* is a vote of confidence in cantorial music and in cantorial rendition of prayers and it came in from the people and the rabbi didn't do anything to stop it because he shut up and you could basically say he gave in to his Cantor. Anyway, that is the end of this class.

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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### The Midrash of the Death of Moses:

#### Encounter with Mortality

Rabbi Alan Kensky

Chair: *Hazzan Jeremy Lipton*

#### *Hazzan Jeremy Lipton:*

Rabbi Alan Kensky is the Assistant Professor of Professional Skills and the Associate Dean of the Rabbinical School at the Jewish Theological Seminary. Born and raised in New York City, he received his early Jewish education at Hebrew Institute of Long Island in Far Rockaway, NY. He attended Queens College, where he received a BA in Political Science. In 1967 he entered the Rabbinical School of the Jewish Theological Seminary where he specialized in the study of Rabbinical texts at the Seminary's Herbert Lehman Institute of Talmudic Ethics. While a student at the Seminary, he studied Political Science at New York University, which awarded him a Masters degree in 1971. Upon his ordination in 1971, Rabbi Kensky assumed the pulpit of Beth Israel Congregation in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He occupied that pulpit for seventeen years, during which time the congregation grew from 150 families to over 350 families and built a full-scale synagogue to meet its expanding needs. While serving as Rabbi at Beth Israel, Rabbi Kensky pursued doctoral studies in Midrash at the Seminary and he was awarded a Ph.D. in 1990. His doctoral dissertation was a critical edition of the *Midrash Tanchuma* on Exodus. In 1988, Rabbi Kensky moved to Philadelphia and for three years he served as Scholar in Residence at Har Zion Temple. About the same time he began leading a seminar for Rabbinical School students at the Seminary, designed to impart strong professional skills to students and to aid them in their spiritual development. He has occupied the position of Associate Dean of the Rabbinical School since July of 1991. He continues to write and do research in the area of Rabbinic thought, liturgy and spirituality. Rabbi Kensky is married to Dr. Tikva Frymer-Kensky, a Bible scholar who is a Professor of Bible at the University of Chicago. They have two children, Myra and Aton. They reside in Wynnewood, Pennsylvania and are members of Temple Beth Hillel-Beth El. It now gives me great pleasure to introduce our scholar this morning - Rabbi Alan Kensky.

#### *Rabbi Kensky:*

Thank you *Hazzan Lipton* for a warm introduction. We're going to study a text from *Midrash Devarim Rabba*, a text that I encountered during my own studies and found to be very powerful and so I translated it. There are many surprises in this text. I won't tell them all, we're going to discover them. And as we reach the end of the text, we will put it all together. What I'm going to do is actually go through the text line by line because the text speaks to us as we read it in its entirety. I could sum it up in five or ten minutes and you might get some of the points, however you would miss a powerful experience, namely, the dialogue of Moses and G-d when G-d decrees to Moses that his time has come and that he is to die and not enter the land of Israel.

There is a lengthy dialogue that takes place. It is found in several Midrashic works, one of them being *Midrash Tanchuma*, another being what we call *Midrash P'tirat Moshe* - the Midrash of the Death of Moses, which is found in Lieberman's edition of *Devarim Rabba*. This is the longest and most expansive of the recensions and I think it captures Moses' fear of death and his eventual acceptance of his fate better than any of the parallel texts. We don't know when this text was written or when it was edited. Guesses would be

anywhere from 1,000 years ago to 1,500 years ago. I have here both the Hebrew and an English text. I'm going to read it in the English, but anyone who wants to follow along in the Hebrew, you'll have it right in front of you. So, perhaps you can hold one on one side and one on the other.

Now, this entire piece is based on the verses of the opening of the portion *Va'etchanan*, the second portion in Deuteronomy. There we read that Moses says: *va'etchanan el adonai va'et hahi lemor*. He prayed to G-d, he sought out G-d's mercy, saying: *adonai elohim, atah hachilotah lehar'ot et-avdecha et-godlecha ve'et yad'cha hachazakah, asher mi-el bashamayim uva'arets asher ya'aresh chema'secha vechigvurotecha*. He says, G-d, You've just begun to show me Your glory and Your greatness, all the wonders that You have performed. Now, let me into the Land of Israel, *e'ebrah na ve'ereh et-ha'aretz hatovah asher be'ever hayarden* 'let me go and see this beautiful land on the other side of the Jordan'. At that point we read that G-d says "No" *vayit'aber adonai bi lema'anchem velo shama eilai* 'G-d became angry and did not listen to me'. *Vayomer adonai eilai rav-lach* 'and G-d said to me, "enough!"' *Al tosef daber elai od badavar hazeh* 'don't talk to me anymore', now is the time to go and appoint Joshua in your stead to lead the people. So, we have three or four Biblical verses describing that scene and in the Midrash we have 5 or 6 pages that really develop this dialogue fully.

O.K., we're about to begin the text. Now, some of you have studied Midrash in one form or another and you know that Midrash tries to explain Scripture by means of other Scripture. Verses are going to be used to substantiate arguments. In addition, you're going to see another Midrashic technique, Moses is going to be citing verses of later books of the Bible, such as the Writings, the Psalms, etc. And of course the rabbis felt on one level that Moses knew everything, and therefore he would cite later Scripture. Alternatively, what's being done is that Moses is expressing ideas and the rabbis are simply putting them in the words of scripture. So, we don't have to take that too literally. As a matter of fact we should not be taking the text literally but seeing it as an expression of a religious truth, of getting to the heart of what it was that was really on Moses' mind. So, let's begin...

'I pleaded' *va'etchanan* - why? That I might enter the land. This is as is written: hearken G-d to my song, do not avoid my prayer. G-d said to him, "what is your request?" He answered, "from the end of the earth I call you when my heart is faint." Said G-d to him, "enough, no more." Moses said to him, "Master of the Universe, you called me Moses 'my servant'. I am your servant and Leviathan is your servant. [Leviathan is the ancient mythical sea monster *Livyatani*.] I plead before You. You responded to Leviathan's pleas and made a covenant with him. As is written: 'will he make an agreement with You to be taken as Your life-long slave'. I too am Your slave and You said before your whole people: 'I will perform wonders'; and You have not fulfilled Your promise, but instead have said: 'die on the mountain which you are ascending and be gathered in'."

So Moses begins with a couple of points. One, that he is G-d's servant and just as G-d listened to Leviathan and made a covenant with Leviathan that he would not destroy it - so Moses says "now I am Your servant, please make an agreement with me" [the agreement being to let me into the land]. And he says to G-d, "You promised me you would show me Your wonders and You haven't" [the wonder being the entry into the land].

*Comment from the floor:*

On that particular point...are wonders the miracles and the plagues, wasn't that what

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*Comment from the floor:*

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## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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G-d promised?

*Rabbi Kensky:*

It's a very good question. But our verse is actually from Exodus. It's after the Golden Calf so it seems to be speaking about the wonders of entry into the land. That's what that verse is clearly speaking of. I think what is behind that also is that Moses may have seen some promises fulfilled but not all of them, and he's not satisfied that he hasn't lived or will not live to see all of them fulfilled. So, I think that is also what's behind it. Let's continue... 4 lines or 5 from the bottom of that paragraph...

"Not only that, but You have written in Your Torah: 'if a slave shall say I love my master', and I have loved You and Your Torah and Your children and do not wish to go free." You know the law of the Hebrew slave - an *eved ivri* - if the *eved ivri* does not wish to go free he may have his ear pierced and then he does not have to go free - *le'olam*. He serves 'forever' - commentators say until the Jubilee. But whatever, he may choose to remain a slave, and Moses is saying that "I have loved You - You're my Master - I have loved your Torah and Your children and do not wish to go free. I should be entitled to stay a slave - to stay a servant. I do not want to die. It says: 'his master shall bring him before G-d'. You have not followed this with me. So now I entreat You, hearken, O G-d, to my song [*rinati*]." G-d said to him, "Impossible. Enough. Your adversary has already decreed death against you and against all creatures." O.K., *ba'al din* - in the Hebrew - your 'adversary' has decreed death against you. And who is that? Adam. Adam, who ate of the Tree and brought death to all. Notice what G-d isn't saying that the cause of Moses' death here is the obvious, striking the rock. In Numbers, that's explained as the reason why Moses doesn't enter the land. But here it's expressed in totally different terms. It's not the personal sin of Moses, but rather it is this universal decree against all humanity. And who brought that on? Adam.

*Comment from the floor:*

Is Moses asking to never die or is Moses asking to see the land? Adam's punishment is that man shall no longer be mortal, so I don't see how it applies in the first place.

*Rabbi Kensky:*

Well, notice when Moses is saying - 3 lines from the bottom of the first paragraph - "I do not want to die." See, certainly G-d is understanding it in this Midrash. It's not just to enter into the land, but it's a refusal to die.

*Comment from the floor:*

But later on he says "if it be Your will, may I enter the land, spend two or three years and then die..."

*Rabbi Kensky:*

We'll talk about that as we get to it. But here, it seems to be about fighting the decree of death. So, G-d says Adam brought it to all creatures. Adam who ate of the tree brought death to all. Similarly, Job said this about the first human. "When his time comes to depart this world, if he is wise his wisdom does not help him, nor his strength if he is strong. And even if he is a world ruler sitting on his throne and even if he is great as the angels, his greatness is of no use to him. And even if he has all the good qualities one can find in this

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world - he is not protected on the day of his death. And even if he will give all the money in this world as payment for his life, it will not help. For all one's greatness and glory, all one's rule and scepter and crown are not acceptable as payment for one's life on the day of one's death. For the world is G-d's as is written: behold to G-d is the heaven and heaven's heavens."

*Comment from the floor:*

It sounds like Ben Sira or a paraphrase of Ben Sira: we are all destined to die.

*Rabbi Kensky:*

Yes, good. And it says: 'in His hand is the soul of all life' *b'yado nefesh kol chai*. So, this is universal and you cannot escape it. And notice that text - how it's a very, very long sentence saying there is no escape. You cannot buy your escape from this fate. So, even if one will give his entire kingdom and all his treasures and hidden wealth and all his servants and property in order to tell the Angel of Death to wait an hour so that he can speak to his children, his soul will not remain in his body for an additional breath. As it is written: "one is not master of the spirit." This is the meaning of the verse "the great and small are there; there one will find princes and slaves; the perfect and the maimed; the fit and the unfit; the impure and the pure." The universality of death inescapable - it is the human nature and fate decreed against the first human beings.

*Comment from the floor:*

It says "the great and the small; the princes and slaves; the perfect and the maimed; the fit and unfit." Everything is positive and negative. But then it says "the impure and the pure," Why doesn't it say 'the pure and the impure,' following that logic?

*Rabbi Kensky:*

Let me just check the Hebrew.... I have two suggestions for that; one is Scriptural and the other is, I would say, aesthetic. The aesthetic answer would be that we are ending this series on a good note. Impure - pure, you see? We're ending on a good note.

O.K., we're continuing the bottom of the page, this is as Job wrote. Notice how Job is being quoted so often? The reason for that is Job is a very difficult book, as you know, and precisely because it's so difficult the rabbis use it to explain difficult things, and it is used in other Midrashic works to explain very difficult theological issues. So, this is as Job wrote, "If he will climb to heaven and his head will reach the clouds." That's our verse. The comment is, he said this about the day of death. For even if one can ascend to heaven and take on wings, when his day of death comes his wings will break and he will fall before the ministering angels like an animal before the slaughterer. So, what does the image of taking on wings sound like? A person who is angelic, an angel. Even if he were to become someone as an angel, on the day of his death it's useless. Similarly, David said his spirit will leave him and he will return to the earth. And the slave is freed from his master, for even if he were purchased for 1,000 gold dinars, his time to die has come, his master cannot say to him "you are my servant", for he is now freed from his master. O.K., for a slave to die is liberation.

Now we come to the second interpretation, a way of reading that verse from Job. "If he will climb to heaven..." that 'he' is Moses. We're talking about Moses: he went up to

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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heaven and his feet stepped on the clouds and he was as one of the ministering angels and spoke to G-d face to face and received Torah from him.” We’re not just talking about anybody in this verse in Job; we’re talking about Moses, who went up to heaven and spoke to G-d as one of the angels, face-to-face. When his time came to die, G-d said to him, “behold, your time to die has come.” Said Moses to G-d, “for naught have my feet stepped on the clouds.” What good was all of this, my going up to heaven and standing on the clouds and receiving the Torah? “For naught have I run before You like a horse, and now I will become as a worm.” G-d said to him, “I have already decreed death on the first human.” So G-d goes back again to Adam. Said Moses, “Then let the first human die, for You commanded him one small Mitzvah and he transgressed it, but don’t let me die.”

O.K., so if Adam sinned, Adam should die - not all of Adam’s descendants and certainly not me. He had one small commandment and he broke it. G-d said to him, “but Abraham, who sanctified My name in the world, died.” Said he, “Abraham begat Ishmael, whose descendants provoke You, as it is written, ‘robbers live untroubled in their tents.’” So, if G-d says Abraham died then Moses says, “Abraham was not as good as me. Abraham begat Ishmael who is all-evil.” G-d said to him, “Isaac, who spread his neck on the altar, died.” Said Moses to G-d, “Isaac begat Esau who destroyed the Temple and burned Your sanctuary. I’m better than Isaac. Isaac gave birth to Esau.” So G-d said, “Look at Jacob, who begat 12 tribes of whom none were unfit.” Now all of you know the story of the tribes, they don’t sound that perfect. But, that’s the way the Midrash reads it at the very end, because the brothers had reconciled with Joseph. At the very end, therefore, they were considered all perfect. So, G-d says, “look at Jacob. He had 12 sons and none of them were unfit, and still Jacob died.” Said he to G-d, “Jacob did not go up to heaven.” Jacob is no proof, he didn’t go up to heaven, I’m greater. “Neither did he step on the clouds nor was he like the ministering angels. You did not speak to him face-to-face and he didn’t receive the Torah from You.”

### *Comment from the floor:*

I find it interesting here that instead of speaking of his own strengths and his own truths and his own beliefs, Moses is trying to break down the others. That’s a very negative approach to what he’s trying to do.

### *Rabbi Kensky:*

Well, he’s responding to G-d’s arguments. You know, G-d says, “look at Abraham.” He says, “why look at Abraham?”

We’ll come back to this, because I want to get to the existential situation of Moses facing his own mortality, which is bringing out all these reactions. This is not the real Moses, the ideal Moses that we have seen elsewhere, but it is the situation that is bringing out this type of response.

So G-d said to Moses, “enough, do not continue.” Said Moses [a new argument], “generations might say that were it not for the fact that G-d saw bad things in Moses He would not have taken him from this world.” In other words, If everybody sees that I die, they’ll say that Moses really was a wicked person.

Said G-d to him, “I’ve already written in My Torah, ‘no prophet has arisen like Moses,’ nobody’s going to question that you were the most outstanding of the prophets. Moses responded, “they might say that in my youth I did Your will, but in my old age I did

not.” G-d said, “I already wrote in My Torah that you were sentenced to death because you did not sanctify My name.” In other words, a reason was given. It’s not that you were a wicked person, but you did one thing that merited the death sentence. It was very clearly stated - no further reason.

*Comment from the floor:*

Was there an inference that had he sanctified G-d’s name he would not have died?

*Rabbi Kensky:*

Probably not, but this line says it. The line says there would have been something else. Because, as Job said, this is the human destiny.

Moses said to G-d, “If this be Your will, may I enter the land and spend two years.” G-d said to him, “It’s a decree before Me that you shall not enter.” So this is the classic bargain. ‘May I live until... this event or that event...’ so common. We see it when we visit people who are very ill, ‘so may I just enter the land a couple of years and then die’. G-d said, “No, it’s a decree that you shall not enter.” Moses said, “if I can’t enter in my life then may I enter after death

[the hereafter]?” Said G-d, “not during your lifetime and not after your lifetime.” Said Moses to G-d, “why all this anger directed at me?” Said G-d, “because you did not sanctify Me.” Said Moses, “with all creatures You are merciful two or three times. As it is written, ‘truly G-d does these things two or three times with man’, and I have but one sin and You refuse to forgive me.” In other words, where is your *midat rachamim*, Your sense of compassion which You show to everybody else who sins? Where is that? Said the Holy One Blessed Be He, “you sinned three times but I did not reveal them [there are some versions that say ‘six times’], once when you said - ‘send a messenger’.” This refers to the very first call when Moses said “send somebody else, don’t send me” - that’s one. Then later when he returned from his first mission and he complained that Pharaoh hadn’t listened and things got worse: “since I have come to Pharaoh to speak in Your name he has been worse to this people.” Then later on in the rebellion of Korach where “he fell upon his face” because of indecision. And again when he called the people “rebels” at the Waters of Strife at *mei merivah* and says to them, “behold you have risen in the place of your fathers as a band of sinful men.”

So, we have at least three and some versions of the text say six times that he sinned before G-d. And G-d says, “I just didn’t mention them, I didn’t want to embarrass you.” So on the last one, where Moses says “behold you have arisen in place of your fathers as a band of sinful men,” G-d asks “were Abraham, Isaac and Jacob sinners that you spoke to their children in this manner?” In other words, G-d is saying it’s as if you - in that verse - accuse the patriarchs of being sinners. See, behold you have risen in the place of your fathers as a band of sinful men, just as they were sinful, now you are sinful. That’s how the Midrash is taking that verse. Said Moses, “Master of the Universe, I learned this from You. You called the people sinners. When You said ‘the fire pans of these sinners’ in reference to the Korach rebellion, You, G-d, called them sinners, so I called them sinners.” Said G-d, “I said ‘who sinned with their souls’, not that their fathers sinned.” Said Moses, “I am one and Israel is 600,000. They sinned before you many times and I besought Your mercy and You forgave them. For 600,000 you showed concern and for me not?” Said G-d, “A decree against a community is not like a decree against an individual.” In other words, there is far

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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more reason to be merciful when there's a decree against a community. It saves many people versus one. And besides, until now, time (*sha'ah*) was given to you. And now the hour is no longer yours." A new concept - the hour isn't yours. Said Moses, "Master of the Universe, arise from Your Throne of Judgment and sit on Your Throne of Mercy so that I will not die. May my sins be forgiven through afflictions that You bring on my body, but do not hand me to the clutches of the Angel of Death (*analach ha'mavel*). If You do this for me, I will sing Your praises before all who will enter this world, as David said 'I shall not die but I will live' *lo amut ki echyeh va'asaper ma'asei yah*. This is the gate of G-d, it is ready for the righteous and for all creatures of all time." So Moses quotes the verses from Hallel: *v'anachnu nevarech yah mei'atoh ve'ad olam halleluyah*, I will praise You forever if You grant me life.

When Moses saw that G-d was not listening to him, he went to heaven and earth and said, "heaven and earth, ask G-d for mercy for me." His prayer is no good, he's going to look for an intercessor, for an intermediary. So he goes to heaven and earth and says, "you pray for me." Said they to him, "before we ask for mercy for you, we will ask for mercy for ourselves. For it says in Isaiah, 'heaven and earth have become ashen'." In one of the apocalyptic prophecies of Isaiah it says that the heaven and earth sometime in the future will become ashen, so therefore they should be praying for themselves. He went to the sun and moon and said, "pray for mercy for me." Said they, "before we ask for mercy for you, we will ask for mercy for ourselves," as it says, "for the moon shall be brought to shame". He went to the stars and planets and said, "ask for mercy for me". Said they, "before we ask for mercy for you we will ask for mercy for ourselves, as it says 'all the hosts in heaven shall molder'."

So again, the hosts of heaven do not want to pray for Moses. They want to pray, if anything, for themselves. He went to the mountains and hills, but there too it says, "for the mountains will move and the hills will topple". In other words they said, "why should we pray for you, because we too will topple in the end of days." He went to the sea and the ocean, and the sea said to him, "son of Amram, what brings you here today?" Why is he suddenly being called 'son of Amram', what do you think that's saying?

*Comment from the floor:*

At this point, do the sins of the father go on to the son?

*Rabbi Kensky:*

I think it's being derisive: oh, son of Amram what are you doing here today? Not even addressing him by his own name.

*Comment from the floor:*

He's being taken down a peg or two...he thinks he's this great savior and great friend, and nobody's listening to him.

*Rabbi Kensky:*

That's right, yes.

*Comment from the floor:*

Remember, he didn't want to be the great savior at the very beginning of his whole story, so fine, he won't.



*Rabbi Kensky:*

Well, now he isn't. He leaves that status.

*Comment from the floor:*

I don't know whether it belongs here, but one of the things that has always bothered me is that there's never anything said about Moses' father and there's nothing ever said about Moses' sons. It's as if he was there by himself without a past and without a future.

*Rabbi Kensky:*

Well, we do know about the father. He is described. The Midrash says he was *gadol hador* - one of the greats of his generation. But it doesn't say too much beyond that. About his children we really don't know that much.

As a matter of fact later on in the Book of Judges we read that an altar to an idol is set up, and the idol is attributed to Ben Gershom. It was put up by the son of Gershom, the son of *mem* and a very big *nun, shin, hay* and its written as Menoshah - read as Menosha. But the *nun* is very large and so the rabbi's say that it really was *Moshe*. This person who put up the idol is the son of Gershom, the son of Moses. But the verse tried to hide it and disguised it as Menoshah. So Moses' children really did not follow him as leaders. At that point, he is out there fighting by himself, it is his fate. It is he fighting for his life alone. Nobody else seems to be joining in this. It is the existential situation of the person fighting for their life alone, which gives it a modern setting. Think of the person alone in the hospital room when the medical personnel or the family or whoever are not there. The person is alone fighting in that situation.

*Comment from the floor:*

Moses is telling the people, to complain to G-d..."

*Rabbi Kensky:*

So he's therefore involving the people?

*Comment from the floor:*

What a good leader; he should encourage them to have more faith in G-d!

*Rabbi Kensky:*

Well the opening part of Deuteronomy is somewhat bittersweet. As I read it each year and I try to take off the blinders that we have, in a sense it's very bittersweet. There's a lot of complaining going on, he's complaining against the people too. He says because of you I was denied entrance to the land, and it's brutally honest. Later on as that sermon of Devarim picks up it goes into great statements of faith and love of G-d - the Shema is there.

*Comment from the floor:*

How do you translate *lema'an*?

*Rabbi Kensky:*

'For your sake' or 'on account of you'. Either way is possible. It depends on the

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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contents. It may even be translated both ways. Like here: *vaidaber adonai bi lema'anchem* where G-d became angry 'for your sake' or 'because of you'. Either way - either translation I think makes sense.

O.K. let's get back to the sea and to the son of Amram. "Son of Amram, what brings you here today - are you not the son of Amram who came upon me with your staff and struck me and split me into twelve paths and I could not stand up before you on account of the *shechinah* that walks on your right. As it says, 'who made His glorious arm march at the right hand of Moses, Who divided the waters before them to make Himself a name for all times.' So the sea says, 'I remember you when you were able to split the sea and now look what has come upon you'. When the sea reminded him what he had accomplished in his youth he screamed and cried and said, 'who will bring me back to the months of yore! When I passed before you I was like a king in this world and now I lie prostrate and no one listens to me.' At this point Moses mourns what has become of him.

Immediately he went to the Minister of the Interior and said to him, "Pray for mercy for me." Said he, "Moses my master, why all this trouble. I've already heard from behind the curtain that your prayer will not be listened to in this matter." Moses put his hands on his head and cried, "Who will pray for me?"

*Comment from the floor:*

Who is the Minister of the Interior supposed to be?

*Rabbi Kensky:*

Ah, the angel Metatron in the heavenly court, one of the angels *who* is considered the Interior Minister.

*Comment from the floor:*

Politics even in the heavens.

*Rabbi Kensky:*

Yes, they had a cabinet and I think it's deliberate that the heavens are described as being a court and not an autocracy. Even there, there are advisors, so to speak.

*Comment from the floor:*

Even with Torah and with G-d!

*Rabbi Kensky:*

Exactly. Notice this is a parenthetical comment here. Because we've been doing a dialogue between Moses and G-d, no rabbis have been quoted. But here's a little insertion. According to Rabbi Simlilot, at that moment G-d became angry at Moses. As it says, "and G-d became angry at me and said to me 'do not speak to me about this anymore'." Then Moses countered with the verse "and G-d passed before him and called the 13 attributes." At that moment the Holy Spirit became cold. G-d became cold. The *ruach hakodesh* became cold. G-d said to Moses, "I have taken two oaths: one that you shall die, the other that Israel shall be destroyed. I can nullify only one. If you want to live and for Israel to die, fine." Said Moses to G-d, "You are coming to me with a prevarication, you are holding the rope by both ends. May Moses and a thousand like him die, but not one person in Israel be destroyed."



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This is the true Moses, right? If it's a choice between him and the people being killed - so, of course, take my life.

*Comment from the floor:*

If that's the case then he has won the argument.

*Rabbi Kensky:*

In which way?

*Comment from the floor:*

G-d gave him a choice. Prior to this it was a sealed deal - he was not going to let him live. Now all of a sudden, G-d says, "I'll make a deal." Moses didn't ask G-d for that choice. G-d said 'I'll give you that choice if you want it.'

*Comment from the floor:*

It brings out the better part of Moses, brings Moses back to greatness again.

*Rabbi Kensky:*

Of course, G-d knew that Moses would, at this point, give in. I think it's clear that G-d knew who Moses was and that Moses at this point would be true to himself and choose death.

*Comment from the floor:*

Did G-d know that Moses was going to do all this campaigning?

*Comment from the floor:*

The campaigning was for naught because G-d wasn't going to listen to any of it.

*Rabbi Kensky:*

As we reach the end we'll talk some more about what this argumentation was about. If it was for naught or not.

Said Moses, "Master of the Universe, the feet which rose to heaven and received the *shechinah* and the hands which received the Torah from your hands, will now lick the dust. Woe to all creatures - when they sin they will say 'if Moses went up to heaven and was as the ministering angels and spoke with G-d face-to-face and received the Torah from Him and had no response to the Holy Blessed One, how much more so with mortals who depart without Torah and without Mitzvot'." So while Moses is mourning he's again giving it a universal meaning. He's taking it beyond himself and saying, woe to all creatures because if this is happening to me then imagine what will happen with all creatures and especially those who face their end without Torah and without Mitzvot.

*Comment from the floor:*

Since Torah and Mitzvot won't save you anyway...

*Rabbi Kensky:*

Well they may not save from death, but they may save from other things. They may

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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save from punishment, they may in the afterworld.

Said G-d to Moses, "Why are you so miserable?" Said Moses, "I'm afraid of the Angel of Death. I am afraid of the *mal'ach hamavet*." Said G-d to him, "I will not deliver you into his hands." And as you know, he doesn't die - Moses doesn't die through the Angel of Death, but rather in a *neshikah* - through a kiss. As it says 'Moses died *al pi adonai*', which the rabbis take to mean *bineshikah* - with a kiss. Said Moses, "Master of the Universe, my mother Yocheved, who experienced such pain from her two sons in her lifetime will now experience more pain at my death." O.K., when all else fails, try the argument of the Jewish mother. So, 'my mother had such pain from me and Aaron during her lifetime, now look at how much more pain she'll experience seeing that I die'.

*Comment from the floor:*

Is she still living?

*Rabbi Kensky:*

Well, it's from the world where the spirits live. Clearly, she's not living.

Said G-d, "this is the plan and this is the way of the world. Each generation has its teachers; each generation has its providers; each generation has its leaders. Until now it was your portion to serve Me. Now you have taken your portion and it is time for Joshua, your student, to serve." It's time for one generation to pass on the scepter of leadership to another.

Listen to this. Said Moses, "Master of the Universe, if it is because of Joshua my student that I am to die, I will go and be his student." O.K., 'I can retire too, and I can be his student. I don't have to be the head forever'. So G-d said to him, "if you want to, go and do it." O.K. let's see what happens.

Moses got up early. Joshua was sitting and expounding. Moses stooped over, put his hand over his mouth, and Joshua's eyes missed him and didn't see Moses. So Moses is trying to hide, to disguise himself, and he comes into the room where Joshua is sitting. In those days the teacher sat and his students stood. The reverse of our custom. The Israelites went to Moses' door to study Torah. They went to Moses' tent as they usually did. They asked, "Where is Moses, our teacher?" The one at the door answered, "He rose early to go to Joshua's door." They went and found him at Joshua's door. Joshua was sitting and expounding and Moses was standing on his feet. Said they to Joshua, "what is the significance of this, that Moses is standing and you are sitting?"

When he lifted up his eyes and saw Moses, he ripped his garments and said, 'master, master, my lord, my father, why do you bring guilt upon me?'" So Joshua, when he realized Moses was there thought this is a terrible offense, to teach Torah in front of your master. So he said, "Moses, you brought guilt to me." So the Israelites said to Moses, "Moses our teacher, teach us Torah." Said he, "I don't have permission." They said to him, "we won't let you go." A heavenly voice went out and said to them, "learn from Joshua." They accepted and they sat and studied with Joshua. Joshua sat at the head and Moses was at his right and Aaron's sons were at his left. And Joshua sat and expounded before Moses. This is a change of the guard - if there ever were one. Moses is sitting on the right, lending moral support. Rabbi Samuel ben Nachman said in the name of Rabbi Yonaton "when Joshua said 'blessed be the One who chose the righteous' [a blessing that was said in Rabbinic time when they studied] the traditions of wisdom left Moses and were given to Joshua."



At that moment Moses' learning left him went to Joshua, and Moses did not understand what Joshua was expounding on. After the Israelites got up from the session, they said to Moses, "conclude the portion for us. Say the final word - *stom*." Said he, "I don't know what to answer you." All his learning has left him. He did not understand the lesson. Moses stumbled and fell. At that moment he said, "Master of the Universe, until now I have asked for life. Now my life is given to You. If this is what my life is to be like, I'm ready to die. No learning, no understanding...I'm ready to die." Once Moses accepted his death, G-d relented and said, "Who will take My part against evil men. Who will stand up for Israel in the time of My anger? Who will fight the battles of My children? Who will seek mercy for them when they sin before Me?" So now G-d mourns, because now it's real. It is real that Moses will die - even to G-d. G-d understands it and so at that moment G-d mourns and says 'who will stand and pray for Israel the way Moses has?'. At that moment Metatron came before G-d and fell on his feet and said, "Master of the Universe, in his life Moses was yours and in his death he is Yours." In other words, he'll still be able to pray; he's still Yours, he's not leaving You, he will be Yours in the world to come.

G-d said to him, "I will explain it to you by means of a parable. It is to be compared to a king who had a son and every day the king was angry at his son and wanted to kill him because he was not mindful of the honor due the king. And his mother saved him from his father's hand. After many days the mother died. The king cried. The servants said to him, "Our lord our king, why are you crying?" Said he to them, "I am not crying for my wife," and really I think this is very offensive if left this way. I prefer to read it, "I am not crying for my wife alone," because otherwise it's saying 'why should a king mourn when his wife dies'? It's not too charitable a statement about our spouses. So, I read it, "I'm not crying for my wife alone, but for her and her son. I was angry at him many times and wanted to kill him and she saved him from me." Similarly, now G-d says regarding Moses, "not only am I seeking comfort for him, but for Israel. In a sense I'm mourning not only Moses, but I am worried about the whole people, the children. Many a time Israel angered Me and Moses stood in the breech and turned My anger from destruction," as it says, "were it not for Moses, My chosen one". Moses saved the people, now who's going to intercede?"

They came and said to Moses, "the hour has come for you to take leave of this world." He said to them, "wait for me so that I might bless Israel, who had no satisfaction from me all the days of my life, because of the many admonitions and warnings that I gave them. I want to go and make peace with the people." He began by blessing each tribe individually. When he saw that time was running out he included them all in one blessing. He said to them, "the time of my death has come." He said to Israel, "I caused you much pain through the Torah and the Commandments. Now forgive me." They said to him, "our lord, our teacher, you are forgiven." Then Israel stood and said to him, "our teacher Moses, we brought you much trouble and pain. Forgive us." Said he, "you are forgiven." And so there's reconciliation between Moses and the people. They forgive him, he forgives them for any hurt they may have brought on one another. They came and said to him, "in but a few moments you will depart from this world." He said, "blessed is His name, He is alive and will exist to all eternity." He said to Israel, "please, when you enter the Land, remember me and my bones and say 'woe to the son of Amram who ran before us like a horse and his bones fell in the desert. They came and said to him, "you have another half a minute." He took his two arms and placed them on his heart and said to Israel, "behold the end of a poor mortal. The hands that received the Torah from the Almighty will fall in the grave." At that moment his soul

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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went out in a kiss as it says, “and Moses, the servant of G-d died there, by the mouth of G-d.” And no one was involved in his burial - no angel and no Israelite. But G-d buried him in the Valley of the Land of Moav.

So we come to the end of this text and I want to say a few things in conclusion. I hope you or can feel the power of the text, which you only get when we're really going through it. I remember a number of years ago, I did a Shabbaton in a synagogue in Philadelphia and I didn't know the congregation that well, and I came in and I was planning to teach this text on Shabbat afternoon. And I came in and I realized the congregation were mostly elderly, and I said “oh my goodness, tomorrow I'm teaching this Midrash on death, on the last days of Moses, I'm in trouble...I'm in trouble.” But I said “this is what I brought, so I've gotta stick to it.” I taught the text and I can't tell you how many people came over and said, “this has been so helpful, so cathartic for me to experience.” Now, I don't know how many of you are familiar with the writings of Dr. Elizabeth Kuebler-Ross' *“On Death and Dying”*. Kuebler-Ross is one of the first of the thanatologists, experts in death, and she wrote a book which was based on her study of the terminally ill. She outlined a number of stages in terminal illness. If a person is told, “you have six months to live,” there are a number of identifiable stages which that person goes through. The first stage is denial. It doesn't really sink in. On one level the person has heard it and knows, but on another level they have not internalized it in their deepest self. Second is anger. Why me? Anger - at G-d, perhaps at others - but a lot of anger comes out in that period. Then, occasionally, we see bargaining. Maybe if I could only live until... Then there is depression. Then if after all these steps – after you go through the denial and the anger and the depression and the mourning - then we find acceptance. Acceptance - where the person accepts his or her fate. Finally, in some situations, not in all, there will be reconciliation at the end.

Now the interesting thing is Kuebler-Ross wrote that in the 1970's, but every one of those stages is in the Midrash. Every one of them. Now, the denial is not necessarily in this text *per se*, but we have other references. And just think - Moses was first told at the Waters of Strife that he would not enter the land. But he does this pleading later, not immediately. And the rabbis say he did it in the fortieth year, he didn't do it earlier, at the time that he struck the rock and was told that he would not enter the land. And the reason that is given in *Devarim Raba* is that he said, “G-d has always forgiven me.” So, it wasn't real yet. There was a long period where it wasn't real for him. When he began to realize that this was happening - when he got beyond this stage of denial - we have the anger. And certainly we've seen a lot of it here – a lot of anger against G-d. “Why is this my fate? I do not deserve this fate. I did not sin the way the others have sinned, my name will be brought to shame”, this very lengthy process. You have to understand. In identifying this, Kuebler-Ross is not saying that denial is bad - or that the anger is bad; these are stages that are necessary. They are natural stages, they are part of the coping mechanism. They are part of the integration, they are part of the acceptance. They are part of the acceptance of mortality.

### *Comment from the floor:*

Did she ever put any religious significance in these stages?

### Rabbi Kensky:

Not in this. I believe in her later work she did. When she dealt with near-death experiences.



So, we've come through the anger. Then we have the depression, and that is the mourning. Remember when Moses mourns after the sea said to him "who are you, son of Amram, look at you today," and he said, "look at myself and what I have become?" He mourns. He grieves his own passing, his own life that's being lost. And that too, clearly is a necessary step. One of the steps that he takes. And finally, the acceptance. And in this case a beautiful reconciliation at the end. So, I think it really is a source of great wisdom that the rabbis identify these stages - not in their philosophical language but rather through this dialogue, through this encounter. And in this text Moses is far more than *Moshe Rabbeinu*. This is Moses as Everyman. This is Moses really speaking for all people who are encountering their own mortality. And so this text, in this sense, also can become a text for people to study and to help them to accept this inevitability. Thank you, we'll stop here. Have a wonderful convention.

**Hadesh Yamenu K'kedem --**

**An Historical Retrospective**

*Hazzanim* Charles Bloch, Isaac Goodfriend,

Abraham Salkov, Abraham Shapiro

Chair: *Hazzan* Saul Hammerman

*Hazzan Hammerman:*

This is a most distinguished panel. We are here this morning to paint a picture of *vos iz gevehn iz gevehn un nishtoh*. We're all going to reflect on our own personal life. How did we manage to get into this career, this profession of *Hazzan*, of *sheli'ach tsibbur*? I recall that when I was 7 years old, studying in the Yeshiva in Brooklyn, a talent scout came around who was a choir leader. His name was Abe Nadler. He was the union representative of choir leaders and his partner was Harry Ellstein. Nadler chose me because I had a nice voice, a nice alto, and I would be soloist with the choir,

In those days, we're talking about 60+ years ago, the group sang at 4 or 5 weddings on a Saturday night. Well, this Abe Nadler, who had an accent, taught me the wedding songs for a soloist. One was 'I Love You Truly', another was 'Vimalei Mishaloseinu'. And he taught me how to sing 'I Love You Truly' - this man who had just got off the boat. And that's the way I sang it as I walked down the aisle: with an accent! Well, I'll tell you something - there was so much empathy and sympathy for me, walking down the aisle - this boy who obviously just got off the boat - we've got to give him an extra tip! So, besides the 50 cents that I made as the soloist, I received tips. Those are just some of the days that were, and some of the memories.

I recall when we had a *s'firah* concert. *Hazzan* Pinchik was the *Hazzan* and we were the choir, and they actually built for the first time, a very costly *balemer*. We sang in the center of it. Abe Nadler was not exactly a thin man - maybe 450 pounds... that's after Yom Kippur. He gave the downbeat for Lewandowsky's *Mah Tovu*, he picked up his foot and his foot went right through the floor. These are among the precious memories that I had.

We all came from this environment, *neginah* was in the home, even while walking with my father to *shul* every Shabbes. My brothers walked and my father *schlepped* me. But we had the *ruach*. There was a *ruach* then. There were for example the *shodt-Hazzanim*, Borough Park was the mecca. Think about this. In Beth El was Hershman, in the *Sephardische Shul* there was Rosenblatt, in Temple Emanuel the great Kwartin had officiated. It was a different era. And where did we study *Hazzanut*? We came out of the service - the big war - so we all flocked to different teachers. There was Raisen, there was Weisser, and there was Lippitz. And why did we go to these people? Because we had the GI Bill. So we studied *Hazzanut*, and the government paid for it. It was very nice.

But already as children we knew the music. We didn't know the technical skills, but we knew how to *daven*. We knew *peirush hamilot*. We had it from the Yeshiva. We felt *chazonus*. So we studied. And by the way - someone asked - did the *Chazonim Farband* ever strike a *shul*? Yes, and it just so happened that my late revered teacher was a union leader. He wanted the *Hazzanim Farband* to merge with the Butchers Union. But again, let me say this... the star *Hazzanim* didn't have to worry about making a living. They sold their tickets for a given Shabbos to a *shul* where there was a Pinkerton guard collecting the tickets that you had to purchase prior to Shabbat. And if you wanted to go in he had the *chutzpah* to say 'go in for a minute, but don't pray'. It wasn't a myth, it wasn't a legend...it was fact.



I knew though, that there were many *Hazzanim* in other synagogues who had to be tailors, carpenters and salesmen in order to earn a livelihood for their families. My brothers and I were fortunate. We joined an organization known as the Cantors Assembly. They gave us self-respect. They declared, whether you're in a *shul* of 200 members or a *shul* of 10,000 members, you are equal in the eyes of this organization as long as you paid your dues. That's where we were indeed so fortunate.

I wanted to give you just an inkling of what it was 60 years ago, and you will hear from this distinguished panel their present experiences and their experiences with the Cantors Assembly. I thank you for your attention. The first distinguished Cantor we have been extremely fortunate to have in our midst for many years. He has been an outstanding *sheliach tsibbur* and at the same time an attorney, and he's equally accomplished in either profession. He has our love and our admiration for all these years and I'm sure he has some vivid memories of our profession. It is a pleasure to introduce Charles Bloch.

*Hazzan Bloch:*

Good morning all. I have some notes but unfortunately my eyes are so bad that I can't read them. I just want to comment on some of the things that our friend Saul Hammerman mentioned. He said something about Nadler, our choir leader, who was tremendous in size. I say this without being derogatory - he was a *galitzianer*, he spoke with a *galitzianer* accent. He looked somewhat like the late Meyer Machtenberg who was a famous composer and choir leader. And when Machtenberg had a lot of engagements - weddings with choirs - and couldn't make them all, he would send Nadler as the substitute without saying this was not Machtenberg. When the wedding went through, flying, people seemed to be happy. But then Nadler went over to the wedding party who were paying the bills and asked for his money. They said "no, we refuse...you're not Machtenberg". And Nadler says to them in his *Galitzianer* accent, *yach zol azai laibn vos yach bin Machtenberg*, 'I should live so long if I'm not Machtenberg!' And he usually got his money. But the little boy who sang 'I Love You Truly' he was only paying 50 cents!

*Hazzan Hammerman:*

It was \$1.00.

*Hazzan Bloch:*

You said \$1.00? It depends on what year, because we started out with a quarter. I was a paymaster and I can remember paying boys 15 cents plus carfare.

*Hazzan Hammerman:*

It was only a nickel for carfare.

*Hazzan Bloch:*

You were very cheap. I didn't make the fare. I was only paymaster. I got a schedule of payments from the choir leader.

*Hazzan Abraham Shapiro:*

Charlie, what about the Yarmulkes that we used to get? The families were promised 12 in the choir. Usually, 8 only came. We went to the corner store where the hangout was

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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and we said 'do you want to eat tonight'? Wear this robe, put on this Yarmulke, you can eat everything you want at the sweet table, you'll walk down with your candle - don't sing. Just open your mouth. And for that we paid them a dime, and we'd go on. Those who would sing would be singing and the others would just stand there.

*Hazzan Bloch:*

Anyway, if he did get his money, Nadler had another gimmick. He took this little boy and walked up with him and said, "act very meekly and humbly". And he said to the family of the groom, "*er iz nebech a yosem* (orphan) - give him a tip". I don't know - did you get the whole tip or did he share it with you?

*Hazzan Hammerman:*

I happened to share the tip. Yes, I was tipped-off.

*Hazzan Bloch:*

Incidentally, in the glorious days of Borough Park, there were star *Hazzanim* in three *shuls* within a couple of blocks of each other. Kwartin was in Temple Emanuel, Hershman was in Beth El and Yossele Rosenblatt was in the *Sephardische Shul*. I had the privilege of being Yossele Rosenblatt's alto soloist. In fact, I was with him for almost nine years, beginning with Ohav Tzedek on 116<sup>th</sup> Street between Lenox and Fifth Avenue. Prior to that time, I went to Hebrew school in the Bronx, in the Montefiore Congregation where the Hazzan was Rappaport, Jacob Rappaport, who wrote wonderful recitatives. And the choir leader was a man by the name of Fischer. The Rabbi at that time was Jacob Katz who was also the chaplain of Sing Sing prison. We had a 4-day Hebrew school. And on Sunday, we had a Sunday School where all of the folding doors were moved aside and it became one big auditorium and Rabbi Katz would give us a lecture on why we shouldn't play practical jokes like pulling a chair away from somebody because it might fracture his spine, etc.

And after that it would be everybody singing together, the whole assembly. And as we were singing I suddenly saw out of the corner of my eye a dark figure walking alongside and stopping at my side, he didn't move. I kept on singing and when we got through he stayed there and he tapped me on the shoulder and he said, "Yingele, little boy, would you like to sing in the choir?" I didn't know what it was all about, but why not? This was Sunday morning. We finished the Sunday school at about 12:00. He said, "be here at 1:00. We have a wedding in the *shul*." The choir would sit up in the balcony of the *shul*, the choir leader standing in front and in the subsequent rows, the singers. He said, "sit in the back and listen". And I sat down as I was told, and listened. When we got through with the wedding, he walked over to me and gave me my first earnings as a singer – although I didn't sing - fifty cents. I was thrilled. He then proceeded to try to groom me for joining the choir and singing as a soloist.

Within a half a year we moved away from the Bronx. We moved to Harlem, West 110<sup>th</sup> Street off Lenox Avenue, right across the street from Central Park. As long as we were there, Fischer came to my home and he asked my parents to let him take me to rehearsals and to services and he would bring me back and he would take good care of me. But, we held it in abeyance. One Shabbos afternoon, we were only six short blocks from 116<sup>th</sup> Street, Ohav Zedek, where Rosenblatt was officiating. And my father, *alav hashalom*, walked me over to Ohav Zedek before Mincha to meet Rosenblatt. Yossele, always a jolly little man, was

wearing a beautiful, new silk *kapoteh*, silk jacket. My father introduced himself and me, and said he would like Yossele to hear his boy. Yossele said, "all right, after Mincha we'll go into the choir room and we'll see." And he *davened* Mincha, and after Mincha he walked us into the room where the choir gets dressed and rehearses sometimes. And he said to me, with a nice command, "sing, *yingele*, sing little boy." Well, my knees started to shake and when they stopped shaking enough for me to sing something, I did sing something. And immediately upon finishing he blurted out and I'll never forget those words exactly as he said them, "*er vet shoin zain a chazen* 'he will be a *Hazzan*.'" This was the beginning. He then arranged for me to meet with the Choir Master Herman Wohl, who was also a composer in the Yiddish theater, and I remained with them almost 9 years in Ohav Zedek and then in the *Sephardische Shul* in Borough Park.

*Comment from the floor:*

What happened when your voice changed?

*Hazzan Bloch:*

Oddly enough, and this was a phenomenal thing, I don't know what the answer is completely. I have some theories, but that's not important – I never stopped singing for one day in my life. I sang as an alto soloist and I had a peculiar type of alto that merged with a mezzo-soprano so that I was able to sing on the alto side, for example in the *ve'al kulum* which you are all familiar with, singing the alto solo in G minor and then the soprano solo a third above, up to the high G. The voice didn't lose anything, it just shifted gradually – the entire scale shifted. The day I stopped singing with Rosenblatt and Wohl I was almost 16 years old and the voice had gradually gone into the tenor quality and the range shifted a little. I went out and the next day – I sang "M'appari" from *Marta*. Yossele Rosenblatt had a cute little story. Henry Rosenblatt was his singing son. You remember that Henry also sang under the name Paul Dennis. And Henry would argue with him sometime about how he was singing, and they would argue with each other. And Yossele said, "*chaimele, du bist takeh a groiser opera zinger* 'Henry my boy, it's true you're a great opera singer.'" *Ober ich bin noch oich a bisl a zinger* 'but I also know a little bit about singing'."

*Hazzan Hammerman:*

The next gentleman I have known for 40 years. Isaac Goodfriend is in the same category when it comes to Yiddish as the late Sidor Belarsky, renowned in so many ways for his interpretations of the folksong. So when I called Isaac I said, "Isaac I would like you to appear on this panel and to perhaps discuss the *Hazzan* whom you thought had great talents, great ability and inspired you to pray. Remember the great Rabbi Heschel. He was at a convention of the Cantors Assembly one time and said, "before a *Hazzan* *davens* he should *daven*". It made sense. And Isaac said, "well, I can think of someone I'd like to speak about, who has all of these qualities, G-d given talents. I'd like to talk about Isaac Goodfriend!"

*Hazzan Goodfriend:*

Thank you Saul. I was fascinated by the name of this session, *Hadesh Yamenu K'kedem*. It has a few meanings, not just renewal of our days, because sometimes we feel who wants to go back to the good old days? Were there really good old days? It all depends on how you look at it. If you look from the perspective of *Hazzanim*, the answer is no,

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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because I remember the days when all of us struggled. We struggled not just within ourselves; we struggled with the *balebatim* (members) mostly.

And what brought us to this day, through the past five decades? I would rather not talk about myself because I need more than the 12 minutes allotted to me, so I will simply try my best to be brief. The *Hadesh Yamenu K'kedem* was taken out of context, to begin with. Just a little bit of Midrash here. It is part of *hashivenu hashem eilecha venashuvah, hadesh yamenu k'kedem*, from the book of Eichah. And that is our answer to what G-d asks us in Isaiah 44:22, *shuvah eilai* ‘return to me’. We said, “no, bring us back; You bring us back and then we’ll meet you half way, You cooperate with us and we’ll repay you in kind.”

There’s another place in the prayers where we say *hadesh yamenu k'kedem*, after *kohanecha yil'beshu tzedeck vachasidecha yeraneinu*. *Kohanecha* literally translated is ‘Your servants, Your priests’, they should be clothed in righteousness. How do you clothe in righteousness? This is my own interpretation. *Vachasidecha yeraneinu* ‘Your devoted servants shall sing to You’. This is talking about *Hazzanim* and *Hazzanut*. Then we ask, ‘renew our days of old’. We ask G-d to give our values back, the values that belong to one who is designated to present the congregation.

Now, here we have two partners, we and the congregation. When we say renew our days as of old, do we really want to go back to the days when *Hazzanim* had to subsidize their living with outside work? You’re looking at one. I said I won’t talk about myself, but just one episode. When I came to the States from Canada in 1956, to Boston, I made a contract with a congregation for three years at \$6,000 to start with. The second year was for \$6,500, the third year \$7,500, and I could not make a living. I had two kids, lived in a three-bedroom apartment where the landlord did not want to give heat in the wintertime. I had the Health Department three times a week, until they stopped coming because they could not persuade this landlord.

So I went to the president of the congregation and I said, “I cannot make a living”. Well he said, “you signed a contract”. So I went to the vice president, he said to me the following, I’ll never forget it. “I remember when my father used to take me to listen to the *Hazzan*. He didn’t need much. As a matter of fact I would visit him on Shabbat. He had herring and challah and he was satisfied”. I said, “Oh, that sounds nice. I wished I had herring for 5 years during the war, during the Nazi years I didn’t have herring. But who are you to tell me now that I should live on herring. How many cars do you drive, Mr. What’s-his-name” (I forgot his name)? This shows you how much he interested me. He said, “none of your business”. I said, “then it’s none of your business what I eat and how I eat”. I did not like the attitude of those people.

Then I went to the rabbi, who supposedly was a dear friend, who had hired me without auditioning for the job in Montreal – he said “you don’t audition, you’re good enough for me”. I said, “I’m going to ask for a raise”. He said, “you don’t need a raise”. So this was the end and I went to the President and I said, “I’m sorry, unless you pay me the third year salary now, I will leave”. So he says, “you’re fired!” “O.K., give it to me in writing, please”. So he said I caught him right on the spur of the moment, he sat down at the typewriter and typed out the letter and he handed it to me. A half-hour later – not even a half hour - I get a telephone call from David Putterman, “how dare you, how dare you – just joined the Assembly and here you go giving us a bad name”. I said, “David, I was fired. I didn’t quit a job; I didn’t break a contract. I was fired”.

I wasn’t a day without a job – and this brings me back to the work of the Assembly.

Cantor Saul Meisels was a great influence on me. We worked together in Cleveland, Ohio for about 10 years. I admired his leadership, I admired his sincerity and his artistry and we became very close friends. And we worked together as colleagues. I was fascinated by the work he did for the Cantors Assembly. He was an officer and later President, and since then I have attended many, many conventions. I can tell you, as an outsider then and as an insider now, I am among my own people. And I felt the importance of what the Assembly did. There is no other organization in the world that lifted up the standard of the cantorate to a level where to be a *Hazzan* is no longer a *shanda* (disgrace) the way it used to be. This is the way we used to be depicted in the old days, 'he's not capable of anything else – he became a *Hazzan*'. The Assembly took this profession and brought it up to such heights that it's an honor.

We have not reached the goals yet, and I'm now talking specifically to the younger *Hazzanim*. We will reach it. We have to go out and recruit new *Hazzanim*. There still is a shortage of *Hazzanim* who will ask for the *Hadash Yamenu K'kedem*, for the values – to get back the values. It's not producing a nice sound and making a nice *coloratura*. It's *rachamana liba ba'i* 'G-d wants the heart'. When the *Hazzan* has the heart it reflects on the congregation. No *Hazzan* can come and tell me, "the congregation doesn't participate. I *daven* before a silent majority - I *daven* before a congregation that is silent, it doesn't even open a prayer book." That's not the point. You can move the people to something. If they just focus their eyes on you, if they just feel... they say *hashivenu eilechai venashuvah* – take us, the congregants, with you back to G-d.

One more point, then I'll sit down. Don't think for a moment that you are not as important as the rabbi with the congregation is. I didn't say more important, I said as important. He's the rabbi and together you work as a team, because there's no way that you can override this established way in the United States of America. You've earned the salary; it's important, very important. Once you establish your own *hasidim* you can't go wrong. Give of yourself more than is required, *lifnim meshurat hadin* 'beyond the letter of the Law'. Don't wait to be asked to do things, do it on your own, because when you do good things you'll never be criticized. They only criticize when you don't do. For doing, a person does not get criticized, for not doing - yes. *Tam venishlam* 'and with this I conclude': *Hadash Yamenu K'kedem*, bring back the values, and with your help, we will.

#### *Hazzan Hammerman:*

Isaac, that was truly eloquent. Despite the many accomplishments of the Cantors Assembly over the years – and there were quite a few – I feel that after you hear what our next speaker has to tell you, you will say "Dayeinu, 'that would have been enough'!" For he together with his wife, Edith and his rabbi, Israel Goldman – of blessed memory – and our legal counsel Herbert Garten, fought for years to achieve the recognition from the U.S. Government that Abe Salkov is about to recount.

#### *Hazzan Salkov:*

There will be very little levity in my presentation. Let me state at the outset my firm conviction that this history must not be rewritten. What happened, happened and the truth must be served. The reason I'm saying this is that when I requested a retainer for Mr. Garten from the Cantors Assembly I was told that no help was available for me since the Assembly was at that time fighting both the Silverman and the Ephros cases. So, for all intents and

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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purposes I was on my own. Fortunately for me, the firm of Fedder and Garten in Baltimore agreed to take my case pro bono, for which I am very grateful. It was only after our victory that Herbert Garten was then engaged as our national counsel.

It all began with a letter from our local branch of the IRS inviting me to appear before them and to explain why I was claiming a housing deduction. They also wanted to know what in blazes was this so-called 'commission' from the state of New York. I was nonplussed and inquired of one of my colleagues in Baltimore, *Hazzan Jacobs* – *alav hashalom* – what this was all about since he, as an Orthodox cantor was getting a housing allowance without receiving any commission. He told me that he had *smichah* and that the local Internal Revenue examiner, who was Jewish, was laboring under the delusion that a cantor had to have *simcha* – that is rabbinical ordination – and then he could qualify. He further stated that this agent maintained this bias adamantly.

In spite of that, I was prepared to go to the IRS office to explain my position. My wife Edith, however, having been the head of the business library of the International Garment Workers Union in New York, and before that a research librarian at Pan American, was more worldly-wise than I. She insisted that I show the invitation to our synagogue accountants. Our accountant, Morris Krueger – also *alav hashalom* – took one look at the letter and told me that if I went I would be like a lamb led to the slaughter. He then put me in touch with Herbert Garten of the prestigious firm of Fedder and Garten, that specialized in income tax law, who after I had explained what our commission was all about, agreed to go to the IRS office and explain the situation in my stead. Of course, even he, with his wonderful art of persuasion couldn't convince a closed mind. And so we waited for the eventual summons.

But when it came, it was a terrible shock. The whole country was against my poor wife and myself. How else to explain the beginning of the letter, 'The People of the United States vs. Edith and Abraham Salkov'. Then began a search for witnesses. One rabbi, who shall remain nameless, was asked by me to define what he thought a cantor was. He thought, and then he answered, "cantor – why he is a religious entertainer". Needless to say, he wasn't asked to testify for us. But my own rabbi – *zecher tzaddik livrachah* – Israel Goldman, was more than happy to help the case. He was the kind of rabbi I would wish on all of you – all my colleagues. On a certain Shabbat service at sermon time he told his congregation, "I'm not going to preach today. I'd rather listen to the *Hazzan*. Please go ahead Abe". In addition to Rabbi Goldman, we also elicited the favorable testimony of Rabbi Drazen, who was an Orthodox rabbi in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Thus, we went to Tax Court. Prior to the actual hearing, the attorneys for the Government called me into a separate room and offered to settle with me for ten cents on the dollar, and to grant me permanent immunity if I would drop the case. I explained that I was not fighting merely for myself, but for the entire cantorate and for the validity of the commission from the State of New York. Upon my refusal to compromise, we went into the courtroom. The judge was a gentile from Oklahoma who knew next to nothing about Judaism. He seemed fascinated by my testimony and I spoke of the history of the cantorate, my duties, and my relationship with my congregation.

During my testimony, an interesting little side game was being played by the counsel for both sides. Upon examination of me during my testimony, the Government's attorney kept referring to me as 'Mr. Salkov', supporting the Government's position. Mr. Garten, however, referred to me as 'Cantor Salkov', supporting our position. In addition to the



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testimony of the witnesses, I myself was on the stand for more than two hours. His Honor seemed enthralled by my testimony. When a Government attorney jumped up and said, "your Honor, haven't we heard enough already?" the magistrate pointed at him and sternly said, "you, sit down... please continue, Cantor". At that point I felt pretty confident about the outcome of the trial. We had to wait some time for the brief to be filed and a decision to be rendered. The decision, naturally in our favor, was most interesting inasmuch as while we based our arguments on the commission and my duties and relationship to the congregation, the judge added the argument of the separation of church and state - "that inasmuch that the Jewish religion has in fact a dual clergy, Government cannot and must not interfere otherwise".

Well, having won, the Assembly then heaped well-deserved honor on our legal counsel, Mr. Garten and our star witness, my beloved and revered Rabbi Goldman. Eventually the Salkov case was used by the Government to deny patronage to an itinerant minister who was not a full-time pastor of a church. While we won the case and the government did not appeal it, they did not acquiesce. That meant that only I could benefit from the decision. However, Mr. Garten, for the next twelve years went around the country fighting for other cantors using my case as a precedent, and winning - and winning - and winning. Finally he wore the government down and they acquiesced. Our case made page one of the Wall Street Journal and is printed in the Congressional Record.

I would like to read a few excerpts - it's important to know how my rabbi testified. He said, first of all, that my installation was more important than his was because his was on a Sunday and mine was on a Shabbat. I mean, he was some guy, I want to tell you. Inscribed upon the Cantor's pulpit in Hebrew are the words, "sing unto Him, sing praises unto Him, exalt Him, speak of all His wonders", which referred to the Cantor in his praise of the Lord.

Well, I'll leave you with one more little thing here, which is quite interesting. The law was finally rewritten and we cantors are finally part of the clergy. The words, "duly ordained, commissioned or licensed" that appear in section such-and-such of the regulation are stated in the disjunctive. To read such words conjunctively would read the words 'commissioned or licensed' out of the regulations, leaving only ordination. That's in the Silverman case, by the way, which was rewritten at that time. And that was just about the first time I ever heard the words 'conjunctive' and 'disjunctive' being used outside of musical tetrachords. So that's the end of it.

*Hazzan Hammerman:*

Thank you, Abe. It just so happened that my first position as part-time *Hazzan* while I was going to school in New York, was in Passaic, New Jersey at Temple Emanuel. I had to stay over Shabbat and I had to eat in someone's home. The home that I ate in on Shabbat for two years was the home of the Shapiros. Abe's mother and father lived in Passaic, and I have known Abe since then. Aside from that, I'll just say this. We all owe a great debt of gratitude to Abe Shapiro for what he has accomplished in behalf of the Cantors Assembly over these years as our Executive Administrator. And now it gives me pleasure to introduce to you Hazzan Abraham Shapiro.

*Hazzan Shapiro:*

Regarding the Salkov and Silverman decisions: you have to understand that they were written in Christological terms. I don't know if you're aware that when the panel of judges

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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finally acquiesced, part of that decision read that Judaism recognizes a dual [and this is important] ministry of a rabbi and *Hazzan*. It is the *Hazzan*, the Cantor that 'lifts the host and waves the palm'. Now you have to understand that what made the difference is the mere fact that we are the ones who lift and bless the wine [i.e., 'host'] over Kiddush, the waving of the palm on Sukkot all Jews are required to do.

But, getting back to my own little stories about *Hazzanim* – I'm not going to get serious, but I'm going to tell you about what the life of an ordinary journeyman *Hazzan* was like. The Shapiro household in Passaic on any given Jewish Holiday was where *Hazzanim* and *Rabanim* were invited. Because it was a Jewish town, everyone spoke Yiddish. But they always wanted to hear a sermon in English. So, myself being a student at Yitzchak Elchanan Yeshivah, I used to bring home a young rabbinical student to speak English. He ate at our home and so did the *Hazzanim* that were invited.

I wasn't home anymore when Saul Hammerman was *Hazzan* in Passaic, I was fortunate enough to already be in my congregation in Lynbrook, and this, please G-d, will be my 52<sup>nd</sup> year! When I spoke to Isaac before the session, we had the same thought. When you think of *Hadesh Yamenu K'kedem* you have to be extremely careful. I believe there's a Chinese proverb that says 'don't wish for something, it's liable to come true'. But I feel that *Hadesh Yamenu* follows, as he said, the *hashivenu eilech venashuvyah*. I'd like to give you another angle on it. The only time we can get *Hadesh Yamenu K'kedem* is if our congregants return to the way all of our parents participated in the service. They were participatory services. I've had Mincha Bar Mitzvahs where I can truly say I had 'observant' Jews. They came and observed; they looked around, *vos geht arum* 'what is this in front of me'? They're frightened because they don't know.

Sam Rosenbaum, *alav hashalom*, spoke to us 25 years ago. He said we'd better teach them, because it's going to fall upon us to do it anyway. Some of you are complaining, "I have to start from *Birkot Hashachar* because there's nobody else in shul at that time who can *daven*. And other things are happening. One *Hazzan* told me that he hasn't done *Atah Yatsartah* in 35 years because there's only a *Hecher Kedushah*. One *Hazzan* that we interviewed for membership – when we asked him to sing the *Unetaneh Tokef* told us "we don't do it". I said, "you what"? "We have a *Hecher Kedushah*". This is on Rosh Hashanah. So I really don't know if our days have been renewed.

We had some characters in my home: Louie Waldman (you people probably heard of him as *Leibele*), Ruby Tucker, Chatskele Ritter, Saul Hammerman. They all ate at my family's table, as kids growing up we sang with their choirs. Let me tell you a story about *Leibele* and the choir. In those years, during the summers especially, we had 4 or 5 weddings on a Saturday night. And Thursday night we went from one home to another and got the licenses. The reason for that is because we promised everyone that we would be there at 10:30 for the *Chupah*. If we had the license, even if we were late, they couldn't pick the *Hazzan* who was already there for another wedding to do it. There was one wedding I remember where the groom weighed – wet – 98 pounds. The night before they probably had a bachelor party for him. I was singing in the choir and during the *Sheva Brachot* I see *Leibele* takes him by the shirt of his tuxedo and he says, "you all right"? He says, "yeah". *Leibele* starts the fourth *brachah* and he sees the groom's eyes are going into his head and he's ready to go down, and he picks him up again like this and he says "ya feeling better"? And he said, "yes". During the last *brachah*, when we're about to start *Meheirah* in the choir, Louie picks him up again and he says, "listen you SOB, I got 4 more to do tonight, I have to

get out of here". Well, we heard that and forgot about the *Meheirah*!

Here's another story. There was a *Hazzan* Brightman, and a hall called the Little Oriental, the length of a bowling alley. Half the people sat up front by the *Chupah* and half were sitting in the back. And Brightman had this terrible vibrato, and Joe Feig, the choir leader, knows him. So Feig says to him, *gedenk* (remember), Brightman, *Mi Von Si'ach* in Bb! I'm giving you an arpeggio in the back where the choir is, behind the people sitting in the last row." At that moment, without waiting for the arpeggio, Brightman begins the *b'rachah* in a key that only G-d knew what it was because of the terrible vibrato. Joe Feig starts to run back the length of the hall to conduct the choir in the *baruch hu uvaruch shemo* response, realizes halfway there that he can't make it in time, and yells back at Brightman in a voice that echoes around the room, "ver gehagel!" Hearing this Yiddish equivalent of 'drop dead' in the middle of the ceremony, we all break up and can't stop laughing until it's over.

There was a place on Howard, I think it was the Deluxe Palace – no air conditioning. After the Three Weeks in midsummer they had fans going. And you had to hold the candle, which was hot, maybe 140 degrees. It was on the top floor. And one by one we were losing the ushers and we were losing the bridesmaids. And as they were fainting, they put them on the chair, and put them on the side! We're into the last of the *Sheva Brachot* and the Matron of Honor was like Nadler – *zavtig*. They grab a chair, but she's so heavy that they had three people holding her and as we're singing *Meheirah* they are carrying her out – right down the center aisle! We just broke up. We couldn't continue. Joe was yelling at us and everything.

I remember the rides over the bridge where we had 7 or 8 kids in a car and we had three weddings. It's already 11:30 p.m. – we had three more to go. And we get a flat. We're standing on the bridge – who's going to fix the flat? There are stories that I could go on and on with: as a choirboy, singing – getting 50 cents for the *Vimalei*. There are a million stories. Talking about *Leibeile*, many of you really don't know that he was a true *Hasid*. He used to go before Rosh Hashanah to the Rebbe for a *brocheh*. He was a *shomer mitzvot*, he was a real *mensch*. If you needed any music or anything like that, Louie gave it to you. I think that's the greatness also of the C.A. Everybody used to hold their music next to them; they never put it down. I can honestly say that at the C.A. we also never leave music. I know I never do when I have some colleagues over at the piano because – I'd gladly give it to them, but somehow this is missing, that is missing, it's out of place. But hopefully, we've stopped that. If anybody wants some music just call me up, I'll give you all the music that I have.

If we begin to work at our *daven'n*, we run into trouble. *Me darf shpil'n mit es* – you have to be able to relax, to play around with it, to feel the congregation, to hear the murmur. Everybody spouts this nonsense about 'we want this participatory service'. My father – alav *hashalom* – always participated. He was either one word ahead of the *Hazzan* or one word behind the *Hazzan* – understand? But that was participation. If you'd like to do anything, one advice is: do your *Hazzanische shtikl* but always lead them into a little *neginah* or whatever they like, and then come back to your *daven'n*. Show that you're a *Hazzan*, even a *poshete* weekday evening. They have to realize that the *Hazzan* is *daven'n* in the proper *Nusach*. You don't have to give a *Vehu Rachum* for 14 minutes – it can be done very simply in 13 seconds. But they have to realize that it's the *Hazzan* that's *daven'n*.

*Hazzan Hammerman:*

I hope you've all enjoyed this session.

### If These Walls Could Sing

**Amy Waterman, Dr. Ismar Schorsch and Hazzan Sidney Rabinowitz**

**Chair: Hazzan Kurt Silbermann**

*Hazzan Kurt Silbermann:*

It is my pleasure to introduce the director of the Eldridge Street Synagogue Project - Miss Amy Waterman.

*Amy Waterman:*

Thank you. I can't begin to tell you how wonderful it feels to hear all of your voices resounding in this space. It doesn't happen very often. I want to welcome you on behalf of our staff and our Board, and to tell you how honored we are to have you with us today and for us to be part of your wonderful celebration. I know you have a full agenda this afternoon and before turning things back to Cantor Silbermann we thought I might tell you a few things about this very special place in which you are convening. Just out of curiosity, have any of you been here before? That's great. So, you can also correct me or add to things as I speak.

I'm anticipating some of your curiosity. I'm here to tell you the answers to the six most frequently asked questions about this project and this building. The first is – what is so special about the synagogue? Well, apart from what your eyes already tell you, there are two firsts associated with the Eldridge Street Synagogue. It was founded by America's first Eastern European congregation. They were Russian Jews – they were here in 1852 – way ahead of that wave of immigration we think about. But it took them 35 years to have the resources and the where with all to build this building which opened in 1887. Second question is – is there a congregation still worshipping here? Indeed there is. The congregation has not missed a Shabbat or holiday in 111 years. However, they moved to the downstairs Bet Midrash sometime in the 1950's. You see around you in this neighborhood evidence of an expanded Chinatown, but there is a sizeable Jewish population. They live further to the east of this building. And so the congregation is small but very steady and they are terrific partners to the Eldridge Street Project, which is the not-for-profit organization I represent.

People want to know how this happened, how the damage took place and the building was allowed to deteriorate in this way. If you can imagine, at the turn of the century this was one of the busiest synagogues on the Lower East Side, which as you probably know accommodated the largest population of Jews anywhere in the world. So this place was hopping. They had mounted policemen in the street to control the crowds, especially for the High Holiday services. But in subsequent decades, as members of the Jewish community were able to move out of the tenement district to more comfortable housing and neighborhoods in other parts of the city, the congregation began to diminish in size. At a certain point they thought they couldn't afford to heat the space – there's a 70-foot ceiling up there – it's a lot of air to heat. Things would start to break that they couldn't afford to repair. So sometime in the 1950's they moved downstairs and most of the damage you see is the result of a badly leaking roof that wasn't properly monitored.

Everybody wants to know the status of the restoration. We have already raised and spent three million dollars to repair and stabilize the building. We couldn't conduct this event today if that were not the case. What you can't tell is that almost all the work that we've done is on the exterior of the building and the foundation, so that's decidedly progress. But we



have somewhere between five and eight million more to raise to make all the structural, mechanical and esthetic improvements. We also want to create an endowment to maintain it in the future so this won't happen again. So now it's really a fundraising question rather than a construction one.

The fifth question is – how will the space be used in the future? We're going to have you back so you can see it complete! Already the building and the sanctuary are used for education programs that serve Jewish and non-Jewish visitors. It's used for cultural activities such as concerts, lectures, exhibits, weddings and Bar Mitzvah services; and in the future we do anticipate instituting a Sunday *Mincha* or *Mincha Ma'ariv* service so that people who come to visit us from all over the world can experience it again as a sacred site.

A kind of restatement of all of these questions is – why are we restoring this synagogue? Primarily because so many American Jews have ties to this neighborhood and to that great immigration wave – the statistic we're familiar with is that something like 4/5ths of American Jews are descendants of those who came from the countries of Eastern Europe that this building symbolizes. Also, we are inspired by the experience of that founding generation for whom this space was a literal sanctuary from the dark, crowded quarters in which they lived: cramped, uncomfortable sweat shop work spaces. It's those people we think about when we're in this space, rather than the more affluent ones who made it possible. And I think you'll agree that it is a beautiful and inspiring place in which to reflect upon Jewish continuity. I heard you gasp when I told you the congregation hadn't missed a service – that is so important to us.

A final question is one that most of our typical visitors usually have – how important in the history of the synagogue were its Cantors? Extremely important. Throughout its history the congregation did not consistently employ a rabbi, but it always had a *Hazzan*. In fact, in 1887, the congregation bid an astonishing \$5,000 to bring Pinchas Minkowsky and his family from Odessa in the opening year. So you could say they put a value on your services. And as you *daven Mincha*, you will hear the acoustics that warranted that exorbitance. And because we're not going to be giving you a proper tour of all the physical details, I'll just bring out one more item to you that we'll want to restore. That is the footprints in front of this music stand, left behind by numerous Cantors through the decades. We're not fixing the carpets. We want to keep those footprints.

So again I thank you for coming. My staff and I will be around to answer other questions you might have later. I wish you a splendid afternoon and gathering throughout the week, so please join me in welcoming Cantor Kurt Silberman again.

#### *Hazzan Silberman:*

When I came to America in the late summer of 1939 I had occasion to come to this neighborhood every day. I was learning the art of being a silversmith, right here at the corner of Eldridge and Canal Streets. I did not know then the significance and historic importance this area had for us. I knew there was a Jewish presence here – so many stores with Yiddish and Hebrew signs showing Jewish life – people speaking Yiddish to each other. But as a greenhorn from Germany, living in Washington Heights, I did not know the magnificent past of this neighborhood. I saw this beautiful synagogue from the outside. Little could I know then that I'd have the opportunity almost 60 years later to stand inside it recalling the *kedushah* of the past.

And being in this synagogue, I have the same feeling as the journalist Bill Moyers, who

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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wrote, "every synagogue is a means of keeping alive the Jewish consciousness, but this one's mission of memory is unique in the world. The Eldridge Street Synagogue connects this generation in a physical place with the generation that came before. It is a symbol of the wave of Eastern European refugees who arrived in that exodus. Can stones speak these rights? Listen. You are listening to the endless murmur of 10,000 tongues expressing wonder. Wonder at being alive, wonder at being here and wonder at being free".

At this 50<sup>th</sup>-year Jubilee Conference we are celebrating a *chut hameshulash* – a three-fold cord tying the past to the present and the present to the future. This gorgeous structure is the impressive past and – thank G-d, as you've just heard – even the present, too. It reminds us of when our parents and grandparents came to these shores, from persecution in Europe to the freedom of America. They would eventually worship in the Park Avenue Synagogue as we shall - on Wednesday – that is the beautiful present. And on Sunday we celebrated as we listened with rapture to our future, hundreds upon hundreds of our children.

It is now my great pleasure, honor and privilege to introduce our guest speaker, Dr. Ismar Schorsch, the Chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary. I know Dr. Schorsch for a long time, from the time when he was a teenager in Pottstown, Pennsylvania where his father was Rabbi. I then lived in Norristown, Pennsylvania and it was wife's and my task to chaperone the once a month teenage dances in Easton, Pennsylvania. Dr. Schorsch's future wife, Sally Korn, was my student in Norristown when she was 13 years old. And I think I must have been the only person who, when Dr. Schorsch was named Chancellor of the JTS – wrote to Sally congratulating her.

Dr. Ismar Schorsch is the 6<sup>th</sup> Chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary. A leader and a visionary, Dr. Schorsch has accomplished many of his dreams for the Seminary. His most recent accomplishment was creating a school that would train quality Jewish educators to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the William Davidson School of Jewish Education. Dr. Schorsch is dedicated to fostering religious pluralism in Israel and has been on the forefront of addressing Israel-Diaspora relations. Following his predecessors in his commitment to *Tikun Olam*, Dr. Schorsch has also been outspoken on environmental issues as well as the moral dimensions of health care in America. Dr. Schorsch is the Rabbi Herman Abramowitz Professor of Jewish History at the Seminary and is one of the foremost scholars in modern Jewish thought. His latest book, *From Text to Context*, epitomizes his wrestling with the important issues of modern Jewish scholarship.

During his 11 years as Chancellor, Dr. Schorsch has become increasingly recognized as one of the leading spokespersons on a wide range of critical issues besetting society. He brings a unique Jewish dimension to such national issues as the environment, separation of church and state, health care, and welfare reform. During Dr. Schorsch's chancellorship, our Cantors Assembly's relationship with the Jewish Theological Seminary has been exceptionally close. We enjoy an honest interchange of ideas and his office is always open to us. May this harmony continue for many, many years to our mutual benefit. And therefore I present, with great pleasure and with personal pride, the Chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary, Dr. Ismar Schorsch.

### *Dr. Schorsch:*

Cantor Silbermann, Cantor Rosenbloom, cantors from across the United States – it is my honor to deliver the first Cantor Samuel Rosenbaum Memorial lecture and I cannot think of a more fitting setting. There is incredible history in this sanctuary, a sanctuary built 100



years ago. If we were to sit here in silence we would hear the music of the ages – Eastern Europe, the Lower East Side – of the ancient synagogue and the synagogue at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. I can't think of a more inspired setting for a conference of the Cantors Assembly than the Eldridge Street Synagogue, so I commend the leadership of the Cantors Assembly for this inspired choice.

My preference would have been to speak to you after Mincha, so that I could have absorbed some of the inspiration of this magnificent structure. But the schedule didn't allow for that, so permit me a few remarks before Mincha.

To begin with, I should like to pay tribute to Cantor Rosenbaum, with whom I worked from the beginning of my chancellorship. He was an extraordinary Cantor because in one lifetime he combined at least four careers. He was, of course, the Cantor in Rochester for nearly 40 years. He was an author of distinction with works on Nusach and Trop and the Jewish life cycle. He was a librettist of note, and in 1973 his libretto for the *Yizkor* cantata in memory of the six million was nominated for an Emmy award. And finally, he provided intelligent and steady leadership for the Cantors Assembly since 1959. There are many reasons to create an annual Samuel Rosenbaum Memorial Lecture, and I am pleased to be able to offer the first in that series.

In February, at the convocation for the Cantors Assembly at the Seminary, we had the privilege of hearing a few words from the Undersecretary of State, Stuart Eisenstadt. And at that time, Ambassador Eisenstadt spoke with great fondness for one of the cantors to be honored at that congregation, Isaac Goodfriend, of Congregation Ahavas Achim in Atlanta. Cantor Goodfriend was a formative presence in the life of Stuart Eisenstadt. He was a close friend of Stuart's father. Stuart's father was a lover of *Hazzanut*, a collector of *Hazzanut*, and someone who could chant *Maftir Yonah* on Yom Kippur afternoon with ease, without much preparation. Cantor Goodfriend instilled in Stuart Eisenstadt a love for *Hazzanut*, and so when Stuart Eisenstadt went to Antwerp to serve the U.S. Government, he befriended Cantor Benjamin Mueller of that city and Cantor Mueller became a rich presence in Stuart Eisenstadt's life. Everyone at the Seminary on that occasion was touched by the sincerity and intimacy of Stuart Eisenstadt's comments about the meaning of two cantors in his life. Those remarks prompted in my mind the thought that I might share with you a few of the cantorial figures who figured in my maturation as a religious leader. I can do that with some degree of justification because the two cantors about whom I wish to speak could not have been more different.

The first cantor is one that I did not know personally, but someone whose name was a household word in our family. For, Cantor Israel Alter became the cantor of the gorgeous Romanesque synagogue in Hannover, Germany in 1925. Two years later my father, *alav hashalom*, became the second rabbi of the Hannover synagogue and the two men became fast friends. They were of the same age – my father had been born in 1899 and Cantor Alter in 1901. My father came from Southern Germany and there was a spiritual affinity between the Judaism of Southern Germany and the Judaism of Eastern Galicia, where Cantor Alter came from. He came from Lemberg, from a learned family of rabbis. And it was in Lemburg that he imbibed Judaism as a force of nature. My father and Cantor Alter respected each other for their knowledge of Torah and for their devotion to Judaism.

Cantor Alter was in Hannover for 10 years. The reason that my father came to Hannover was because it did not have an organ, and with Cantor Alter it didn't need an organ, for his glorious tenor filled that very large sanctuary. It was a sanctuary graced with splendid

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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acoustics. My father often spoke about the manner in which on a Shabbat or *chag*, Cantor Alter would fill that large sanctuary – that seated well over 1,500 people – with the power of his voice. Cantor Alter left Hannover in 1935. He saw the handwriting on the wall.

Hannover had a second cantor by the name of Samuel Hershkowitz, and of course I know far less about Cantor Hershkowitz than I know about Cantor Alter, except for the poignant fact that Cantor Hershkowitz never left Germany and he met his death in Auschwitz in 1944.

Cantor Alter, of course, went on to become one of the premier cantors of his generation – a man who enriched synagogue life in South Africa and in New York and became a stellar teacher of cantors of the next generation.

The other cantor who played a role in my life was not known to any of you, for when we came to Pottstown, Pennsylvania in 1940, we came to a small community. Hannover had 6,000 Jews and a glorious Romanesque synagogue that was destroyed on Kristalhasht. Pottstown had a small Jewish community of under 200 members, but a lovely basilica-type synagogue built in 1929. The cantor who presided in Pottstown when we arrived was a Reverend Harry G. Blatt, and I always referred to him as Reverend because in those days that's how a cantor was known. Cantors were not called *Hazzan*, they weren't even called Cantor - they were called Reverend. That still was the era of assimilation when we wanted to make it in the United States.

Reverend Blatt was a sincere Jew – a man of small stature and great personal tragedy. He could be found in the synagogue every morning and evening – for Shacharit and Mincha and Ma'ariv – and of course he held forth on the holidays and on Shabbat. Cantor Blatt knew *Nusach* well. He taught the Bar Mitzvah boys, he read the Torah, and he was a *Kol Bo* who sustained the religious life of a small Jewish community. In fact, he was also a *Shochet* and I still remember taking chickens on Friday morning over to Cantor Blatt and having him *shecht* the chicken so my mother- *aleha hashalom*- could prepare it for the Shabbat meal. Cantor Blatt came to Judaism naturally and, he would often pull out a *sefer*. He was a learned *Hazzan* and he too found friendship with my father because of their love of Jewish learning. I have two books that I treasure, from Harry Blatt. One is a *Tanach*, published in Berlin in 1906 with his name inscribed; and the other is the Jastrow Dictionary for Talmud, which also has his name inscribed. It's the small edition of the Jastrow Dictionary and it accompanies me to this day as I sit and study Gemara.

Both of these cantors brought me close to the beauty of the synagogue. There was one other musical experience of my childhood that drew me to the music of the synagogue, and that was my father's effort in Pottstown to create a choir for the holidays. My father had a fine musical education, so his appreciation of Cantor Alter was genuine. And when we came to Pottstown my father created a choir, which sang for many years on the High Holidays and occasionally, even on a Friday night. It was through that choir, which would practice in our home on Monday evenings, that I, as a youngster doing homework upstairs, became intimately familiar with the compositions of Lewandowsky and Sulzer for the *Yamin Noraim*, and to this day when I hear one of those High Holiday compositions a flood of memories comes back to me from my childhood, associated with the beauty of that Central European achievement of Cantorial music in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. So, I come to this lecture honestly. I have a deep love for *Hazzanut*, a love instilled in me by my father and the cantors with whom he was associated.

I often think of what is the task of the *Hazzan*. And I think that your function in the synagogue can best be described by a verse that we sing each time we recite the *Hallel* –

*pitchu li sha'arei tzedek, avo vam odeh yah* – ‘open for me the gates of righteousness, so that I may enter and give thanks’. Isn’t that the desire of so many Jews who come to the synagogue these days? They want admission into the sacred, they want to feel something holy in their lives, they want to recapture the *neshamah* which has been numbed and deadened by the pains of materialistic life in American society. But one can’t simply walk into a synagogue and gain access to the sacred. One needs a teacher, one needs a guide, one needs a source of inspiration. And that teacher, that guide and their inspiration comes from the *Hazzan*. It is not the kind of instruction that needs endless hours of careful, meticulous teaching. It is the kind of instruction that is transmitted from soul to soul, for the medium of that instruction is music. It is to music that all of us resonate. If you are effective in your work you are the guardians of the gate to the sacred. You open those sacred portals for the Jews who seek admission, who want to add an extra dimension to their personal lives. *Pitchu li sha'arei tzedek* – that is your function – to help Jews open the gates to the sacred.

What is the nature of the synagogue service? It is a service that rests on two books – the Siddur and the Torah. Both of them are sung. We never read them, we only chant them. From the Siddur we chant in the form of *Nusach*, and from the Sefer Torah we chant in the form of the *Trop*. And the synagogue loses its sacredness if there is no chant. The synagogue does not offer prayer without music. Prayer without music belongs in the Bet Midrash, but in the Bet Keneset one joins music to the sacred. You are the gatekeepers for the Torah and for the Siddur. Through your skill you open the mysteries of those two books for the Jews who wish to gain an experience of the sacred.

We need to recapture the purity of the music. I think that we have made great strides in once again wedding *Nusach* to *Tefillah*. And you are *Ba'alei Tefillah*, you are the masters of *Tefillah* - you know how *Tefillah* needs to be rendered. But there is a second book that belongs in the synagogue and this too needs to be sung – and that book is the Torah. And if there is something left for us to do in our Conservative synagogues it is to re-emphasize the centrality of *K'ri'at Hatorah* - the reading of the Torah. In many a Conservative synagogue when *Nusach* prevails and *Tefillah* is done with dignity and intensity and holiness, the reading of the Torah falls far short of perfection. We’ve had great trouble with the reading of the Torah and we have tended to solve that challenge by reducing the reading of the Torah to a triennial cycle. But that’s not the real solution, because you know as well as I that we don’t do the triennial cycle a lot better than we do the annual cycle of the Torah reading.

We have not yet mastered the beauty of the music of the Torah reading. And the truth is, we will not make of the Torah reading a religious experience for our congregants until we do two things. First, we need to study the *parasha* before we come to *shul*; you can’t study the *parasha* in *shul* and expect a religious experience. To study in *shul* is to turn the *shul* into a Bet Midrash. But the reading of the Torah, as we all know, is a re-experience of *Ma'amad Har Sinai* – it’s an emotional experience. It is the experience of Revelation. It is not the experience of interpretation and study.

So the first thing we need to do in our synagogues is to recapture the complete cycle each Shabbat, and one way to do that is to begin early in the week with the study of the *parasha* for that Shabbat, so that our congregants come to *shul* with some knowledge of its contents and with a readiness to let themselves go so that they can appreciate the reading of the Torah. The second thing that we need to do with *K'ri'at Hatorah* is to read it well with *Trop* and a fluid Hebrew so that it becomes an emotional and not an intellectual experience. And if we can achieve that, then we will have wedded the two books of the synagogue to

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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music – *Tefillah to Nusach* and Torah to *Trop*. If that could be the challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we could say that we have returned the glory of Conservative Judaism to a place like the synagogue here at Eldridge, where 100 years ago Torah and *Tefillah* were both rendered perfectly with *Nusach* and *Trop*.

We are afflicted on the extremes and our challenge, it seems to me, is to achieve the normative. The ultra-Orthodox synagogues do away with *Nusach* entirely. In many *Yeshivot* the only object is to recite the words, and there are so many of them that they become deadening if they are not uplifted with *Nusach* – with music. That's the threat on the one side, that the synagogue simply becomes a place for repeating and reciting words. And the other challenge is on the Liberal side – where the hunger for music and contemporaneous experience turns the synagogue into a sing-along, which does violence to the *Nusach* as well. And in many a *shul* where the sing-along has triumphed, the reading of the Torah is still an abysmal failure because the leadership simply doesn't know what to do with the *K'ri'at Hatorah* and even the salvation of a triennial cycle is but a temporary bandage for a serious wound. So we need to maintain the steady course to create a synagogue that rests of the pillars of *Siddur* and the Torah and sees to it that both are rendered musically.

The most important institution in Jewish life is this institution, the synagogue where you preside. All the concern over Jewish identity demonstrates that this is where Jews are made. Federation lives off the synagogue, UJA lives off the synagogue, Israel Bonds lives off the synagogue, JCC's live off the synagogue – 70 % of the members of JCC are synagogue members. The synagogue makes Jews. The synagogue is where we reconnect with G-d and it is through your skill, it is through your piety, it is through your learning that Jews are brought closer to G-d. The service that you seek to create and sustain must be as beautiful and inclusive and participatory as we can possibly make it. There are so many Jews who wish to come in. We need to make it easier for them. We need to make it more inviting and we need to do those things while preserving the sanctity and the dignity and the tradition of the institution.

The first 50 years of the Cantors Assembly have been years of accomplishment, years of laying the foundation, years of beginning to build the edifice for the Conservative synagogue. In closing this lecture, I wish to express my respect and admiration for your accomplishments and to offer my prayer that in the next 50 years you may continue to construct, you may continue to expand and beautify the Conservative synagogue so that it shall insure our survival far beyond the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### *Hazzan Silberman:*

Today we are truly blessed. We stand in an awe-inspiring place and just now we heard the inspiring words and thoughts of Dr. Schorsch. They were indeed inspirational and thought provoking, and we hope we can satisfy the wishes of Dr. Schorsch that we will be a blessing to all Israel.

Today is the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the graduation of our *Hazzan* who will lead us in *Mincha*. Forty years ago today he graduated from the then Cantor's Institute of the Seminary. Cantor Sidney Rabinowitz of Beth El Synagogue in Stamford, Connecticut, where he has been for 28 years, is the only one of the Jewish *Klei Kodesh* to be honored by the Council of Churches and Synagogues. He was named Clergyman of the Year. So we say *Mazel Tov* to him on his anniversary as we call upon Cantor Rabinowitz to lead us in the *Mincha*.



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## [Mincha Service]

### *Hazzan Silberman:*

I would like to thank Cantor Rabinowitz very much. If that is a product of our school we are blessed. And not only is he a good *Hazzan*, he's a *mensch*.

Today, at this 50<sup>th</sup> year Jubilee Convention, we the Cantors Assembly want to acknowledge work done by all those *Hazzanim* who have served congregations for the past 40 years or more. We are proud of you for your long- time and diligent service. Countless worshippers and congregants were inspired by your devotion and leadership. We have worked in the Cantors Assembly office from your files, from the information you gave us when you first joined, and over the years as you sent in questionnaires and biographies. If we have missed anybody, please let me know. I will now call now the names we found through our research. Please come up and receive a token gift from the Cantors Assembly in recognition of your faithful service. As I call your name, please come forward.

Shabtai Ackerman  
Ben Belfer  
Frank Birnbaum  
Charles Bloch  
Louis Danto  
Irving Dean  
Samuel Forde  
Reuben Frankel  
Mordecai Goldstein  
Isaac Goodfriend  
Henry Greenberg  
Shlomo Gomberg  
Erno Gross  
Saul Hammerman  
Sholom Kalib  
David Kane  
Simon Kandler  
Joseph Kohn  
Jerome Kopmar  
Morton Kula  
Abraham Lubin  
Melvin Luterman  
Solomon Mendelson  
Kutz Messerschmidt  
Maurice Neu  
Sidney Rabinowitz  
Sidney Rube  
Max Rubin  
Abraham Salkov  
Morton Shames  
Abraham Shapiro  
Gregor Shelkan

**Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998** 

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Kurt Silbermann  
Pinchas Spiro  
Larry Vieder  
Bruce Wetzler  
Marshall Wolkenstein

We thank you for your cooperation. Now, before we join in the Gerovitch version of *Adon Olam*, I would like to thank Dr. Schorsch, Cantor Rabinowitz, Amy Waterman and all of you for a beautiful afternoon.



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## Synagogue 2000 - How Will It Affect Us?

Adina Hamik, *Hazzan* Ramon Tasat

Chair: *Hazzan* Erica Lippitz

*Hazzan* Erica Lippitz:

This is a session on Synagogue 2,000 and what it might mean to us. I want to first explain and apologize that the presenters are not the presenters advertised. That was due to a miscommunication between me and the folks who were printing the program. Dr. Larry Hoffman, in particular, who is one of the founders and visionaries of this project, is in Dallas today. Our colleagues Joel Caplan and Lorna Wallach Kalet have been zipped up to Park Avenue Synagogue for rehearsal exactly in this hour and they offer their apologies. However, we do have with us, thankfully, Adina Hamik. Adina is the Project Director for Synagogue 2,000; and on his way to this room is Ramon Tasat. Ramon is *Hazzan* at Congregation Agadas Achim in Alexandria, Virginia, one of the Conservative synagogues participating in this project.

I want to say one word about why we're having this session, and then I'd like to take you on a little journey in your mind. Synagogue 2,000 is a national trans-denominational project that has touched not only the minds, but also the hearts of the synagogue members who have been privileged to participate in it thus far, the last two years. That's why you're hearing about it today. It's a radical [in the best sense of that word - 'root'] re-envisioning of what synagogue life might be, and the best people to do that sort of envisioning right now are the people most dedicated to the success of the synagogue. That's the people in this room.

I should also say, because I haven't had a chance to meet all of you by name, that I'm Cantor Ricki Lippitz. I serve Congregation Ohev Shalom in South Orange, New Jersey.

I'm going to ask you to think, not about the roughly 30% of the Jewish Community who are affiliated and come to your *shul*, whether they come every week or maybe only a few times a year. I want you to think about the other 70% of the people, who live within three blocks of your synagogue, who don't feel that synagogue life has anything to offer them. Or they came to some other *shul*, and they left - unchanged. They didn't see any particular reason to walk back in. I want to ask you to think about a time when you're not the Cantor, but the guest in someone else's synagogue. Or even, if you can, remember a time when you didn't know as much about *shul* as you know now. And you walked in, perhaps at an earlier time in your life or earlier time in your training. Close your eyes. Think about the synagogue. Envision one of them that you walked into, when you were just a guest. Think about the doorway that you walked through to enter the building. Think about the passageway. Did the synagogue have any signs? Did you know where to go to find the sanctuary? Did anyone greet you?

You walk into the sanctuary - do you have the sense of entering a portal that goes somewhere special? Do you stand alone? Does someone reach out for you? Do they hand you a Siddur? Do they say "Shabbat Shalom?" Is this a warm and friendly place, or a cold and distant one? If you need help for something, is there someone to ask? What kind of feel does this *shul* have? What gives it that quality? What kind of place is this? Is it upbeat, expensive - how do you know? What kinds of people would be drawn here? What does their being there tell them about themselves? Do you want to go back? O.K., open your eyes.

I think it's particularly difficult for us, as professionals, to put ourselves in the place of a person for whom Hebrew looks like Chinese; someone who had a poor or nonexistent

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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Jewish education; or someone who had a bad experience in the synagogue, whether as a child or as an adult – someone who's embarrassed.

This is *amcha* right now, or the majority of *amcha*, and the experience you just envisioned might remind you of where each of those folks are when they enter the portals of the *shul* that you call your home. What are some of the words that came to mind as you envisioned your own earlier experience? How would you describe the experience? How would you describe the place you visited, what was it like? Give me an adjective.

*Comment from the floor:*

A warm, *heimish* place.

*Hazzan Lippitz:*

Great! What made it that way?

*Comment from the floor:*

Well, you got there and immediately you were not just ushered in but you were greeted by a few people, congregants wearing tags with their name. They said "Shabbat Shalom". They knew we weren't from the congregation, and it was a warm feeling knowing they knew we came to visit, and they reached out.

*Hazzan Lippitz:*

What experience did you have, walking into the *shul* of your memory?

*Comment from the floor:*

It was positive. My mindset made it positive. It was nice that a few people came up to greet me, but if they hadn't that would have been O.K. That's just me.

*Another comment from the floor:*

Actually, I ran through a lot of experiences, I was away from synagogue life for 20 years before I came back. And when I came back it was to a congregation which everyone looks to as a model *shul*. I went every Shabbat for three months before anyone spoke to me. A man walked up to me and said, "are you a member here?" Those were the first words he said to me. All the things I came for, I brought with me. But if I put myself in the place, as Ricki asked, of someone for whom the Siddur was alien I would have been made to feel like an outsider. I became aware of the looks and stares of people – 'who is he?' As a single person walking in there I felt that I was being inspected, judged, and were it not for all the seeds that had been planted years before I would have felt very unwelcome. Finally, a man spoke to me, an usher, who said, "are you a member here?" I said, "No." "Shabbat Shalom", he said, "just asking". And he walked away. I know that in my own *shul*, it's a battle. I can't get anyone to usher, let alone to greet people in the parking lot and offer to show them the way. The campus is so large that elderly people who have difficulty walking need to be escorted.

*Hazzan Lippitz:*

These kinds of experiences and these kinds of concerns are what led to the creation of this national project. I'd like to have Adina Hamik, who is our Project Director, give you a



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capsule history of what this project is all about. Before she does that I just want to ask one question. How many people knew anything about what this is before they walked in the room? There has not been any formal outreach, so afterwards, I'd like to hear how you knew about it.

*Adina Hamik:*

I am the Project Director at Synagogue 2000 and I work very closely with Larry Hoffman here in New York, and with our counterparts Ron Wolfson and Ellen Franklin in our Los Angeles office. For some of you who know a little bit about this project I will catch you up to speed. About five years ago Ron and Larry started talking. Larry has been working on this liturgical view of the synagogue for the past 15 years. He has really developed his theory on new ways to look at the liturgy in particular. He was branching into his own experiences of his synagogue life, from which he felt very alienated. He came from a very traditional synagogue and then he befriended a Reform Rabbi, and now he himself is a Reform Rabbi, which tells you the power of his personal connections.

Rachel Cowan, from the Nathan Cummings Foundation has been working with Larry on many different projects, and connected the two. Ron Wolfson had also been really stuck with some issues that he was finding within his own congregation. Therefore, these two powerheads – Ron in the Conservative movement, and Larry in the Reform – came together to meet. They really spent the first year just having conversations with people and holding focus groups. They also did a little of what Ricki was doing today, saying, "tell us about your synagogue experience. Tell us about how you feel when you go into a synagogue. And outside of the home, where is it that Jews should congregate? And where is it that they should get together – what vehicles are out there?"

Many times we've seen in the past decade how people have gone away from the synagogue. And that's unfortunate, because the synagogue should really be a place where people feel at home. I'll use a Ron Wolfson analogy. Think of the synagogue as a AAA card. When do you use this AAA card? You use it when there's trouble, right? You pull it out – I have a flat tire, my car won't start, I'm on the side of the road – and it's a great card for an emergency. But, if you really take advantage of the AAA what do you go and get? Trip Tiks! And the Trip Tik doesn't just tell you how to get from here to there, it tells you all the historical sites to stop and see, and if you're really interested you can go off on different roads. It tells you details. So too, should synagogue life be able to offer that. Synagogue life is wonderful about offering milestones and Jewish rituals. We're great at birth and Bar Mitzvahs and weddings and death, but what happens in between that? If I'm not getting married, where do I fit in synagogue life? In fact, I now find myself moving to New York and all of a sudden I am the ultimate seeker. I never thought I'd be in a position to be a seeker, but I've been going to different synagogues and people always say "what denomination do you affiliate with", and now I find I'm searching. Synagogues that I thought for sure I would join, I haven't yet joined. Part of it is that simple welcome thing. I've gone to a couple of synagogues where immediately, someone said, "hi, welcome". I've gone back there, probably a synagogue I never thought I'd be affiliated with because of such a simple, simple touch.

Synagogue 2000 is a national project. It's trying to say that within the synagogue there are many different entry points, through different people along the way. Whether you are single, whether your children have left the house, or whether you're a mother whose

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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children have just gone off to school, or maybe your child is getting a driver's license – each one of these really is a milestone. For each one of these entry points, no matter where you are in your life, there should be a form of Jewish expression. You should have a place to feel connected, and a synagogue should be that place.

And so, with a whole scope of entry points, Synagogue 2000 selected 16 pilot sites around the country – eight Conservative and eight Reform – to test out some of our models. How do we approach healing in the synagogue? How do we approach prayer? What role does music play in the synagogue? How do we begin to address these issues? And we set up a curriculum to begin to address some of these issues. We are now at the latter stage of our pilot program. We're now starting an additional pilot stage. We're going to Washington, D.C. next year, where we are taking on 5 congregations in conjunction with the local Federation as kind of a three-way partnership. What will it look like when we come into one complete community and start working with them on a larger project? That way we'll be able to work with some on core curriculum and with others in more peripheral, less intense areas.

*Comment from the floor:*

What about the sizes of the congregations and the make-up of the congregants?

*Adina Hamik:*

When we first sent out invitations to apply for the project we got over 100 applications. There were various reasons why we selected the particular 16 synagogues. We decided to limit the size, but anywhere from 300 to 1,200 was the range we began with. When you're talking about change – it's like you are in the middle of a huge renovation of your synagogue and you have a lot of money going into that, and you have a lot of money going elsewhere and all of your energy is really drained in different areas – you're probably not "change ready" for a project such as this. Through interviews with the Rabbis and Cantors and other people involved, we limited it to "if you're really ready for something new and exciting, this could be the focus of the synagogue." That's the kind of congregation we were looking for at the time.

*Comment from the floor:*

How many months does the project go on?

*Adina Hamik:*

I don't think change has an end. I say this because with a lot of national projects it's easy to come in and give a lecture and leave the community – come in, say "I'll fix you with this" – and then you're off. We're a project committee that says that's not what we're about. We were thinking originally, it may be a two-year project – it's now more like a three-year intensive project and how the alumni end of it works out, we're not really sure. We're still working a lot with that.

*Hazzan Lippitz:*

Can you talk about how anybody can look into this? I think an important element is that, although there's only funding to do this work with 16 congregations, it's not a closed

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project in any way, shape or form. Can you address how people who are interested in what's happening can find out more?

*Adina Hamik:*

At this point we're still developing our strategic plan, and no one can simply apply for the project. However, in the next three years we'll be taking on ten different communities throughout North America. We're also having a kind of affiliated membership for synagogues that are interested who can't undertake such a large project. It's a very intense project. It's a curriculum that requires a core group of at least 25-30 in your congregation for four hours twice a month. It's a new way to think about meeting; it's a new way to think about how to greet people at the door; it's a new way to answer phones; it's how faith plays a part in the congregation; it's a very intense project. Ramon can talk a little bit about it also.

*Comment from the floor:*

How did the project get started and what denominations are involved in the project?

*Adina Hamik:*

It is transdenominational. At the start we decided to take Reform and Conservative. At this point we will be including Reconstructionist and we have Orthodox *shuls* in many of our cities who are interested in joining the project. As to how the project got started, it was really Larry Hoffman and Ron Wolfson who had seen this crisis around the country of people just not going to synagogue, Larry Hoffman being one of them. People were just not finding a connection in the synagogue and the question arose, 'what is making people not want to go to *shul*'? Clearly over the last five years a national spiritual rejuvenation was happening, yet where were the Jews? Where were they going for their spiritual outlet?

We've learned a lot with the pilot program – that's what a pilot group is all about. One of the things that really flashed in front of us is 'how do you get the Cantors and Rabbis, in particular, into a mind set of understanding of what their congregations need done now as opposed to where they were 40 years ago? So what has evolved from this (and I don't like the name for this) is Clergy 2000. Right now there's been a think tank called Clergy 2000; it's continuing for another year. The Clergy 2000 group is made up of educators, Rabbis, Cantors – at this time I'll say it is the Reform milieu, just because Larry Hoffman is leading the project. Basically it's looking at how in the Rabbinical and Cantorial schools we can begin to address these issues in a non-denominational way. We just got through having a meeting with Carole Balin, who's a professor at H.U.C., and she gave a whole discussion on the history of Rabbinical education and how it's changed over the past 100 years. She gave us milestones in what was taught and what was needed along the way and where we are today. She did the same thing with the Cantorial school at H.U.C. Granted, you Cantors may already know the history, but in helping shape the schools, it's your voice that's needed. It's bringing in people who have been in the field and have them saying "you know what – when I was in the field, you know what would have really helped?" You can find a lot more information on our Web site and it tells about the next phase of the next year –

[www.syn2000.org](http://www.syn2000.org).

The way our curriculum is set up, the first year is nothing but intense study. And the curriculum is made up of broad-based liturgical ideas of the Amidah. Then we talk about

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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applications and how to educate someone about the Amidah or how to educate someone about musical theory in a synagogue. But the whole first year is intense study that most congregations say is too much. Part of this, without a doubt, is because each synagogue has its own rhythm and rhyme, and what will work in one synagogue is not going to work in another synagogue. And so, part of this is allowing the core group of people and its Rabbi to take this stuff and see how it applies to their site. We do an overall education of where each synagogue came from, what's its make-up, why does this one have Mincha and that one doesn't. And that's important, because Mincha may be a welcoming thing for those who have come along the way, and you can't just get rid of it. So how do you balance that memory of yours with someone like me who's now entering the synagogue for the first time? We address those issues in a very, very serious manner. In fact, we get written up a lot because it sounds light and fluffy, until you get in the project and begin to understand the weight of it.

### *Comment from the floor:*

I sympathize with what you are saying. My congregation is one of the Conservative congregations that is part of this project. I would like to tell you something which I think is crucial. While studying the methodology of Synagogue 2000 something meaningful happened to me and I would like to share it with you. One Friday night, it was extremely rainy. It was a Kabbalat Shabbat and it was raining. There were 10 people coming to synagogue. Normally, for me, pre-Synagogue 2000, I would have said, "oh, no one came." Now that I was into it I thought, "why is that 10 people came this evening, with all the rain – what is that they are seeking, what are they looking for and what can I give them to make this something meaningful?" And I think that there is value in that and I think that this is some of what Synagogue 2000 'forces you' (I'm using it in a good way) to actually try to see.

Another example; we were talking about the Amidah before and how is it that many times you finish the Amidah and your congregation is like mine – we *daven* together until the end of the Kedushah and then we continue silently. We do wait until everyone finishes but there was this sensation that as soon as we finished the Amidah someone would say, "page 106, *Kaddish Shalem*," and that would be it. Being a part of Synagogue 2000 made me rethink that moment and try to have some kind of a bridge – where you were looking inside of yourself – to a more meaningful way of handling it. I thought of including a tune – very mellow, very soft – that would bring everybody into a mood that would help them go from A to B, from private devotion to public praise. That, in my opinion, we didn't have before.

### *Another comment from the floor:*

In my congregation, when we first heard about Synagogue 2000, even though we're not in the program we came up with the idea to rearrange our main sanctuary. The pews, which currently all face forward, would be reoriented toward a portable Bimah in the middle. Chairs would be arranged in a 'U' curve. My question is, how do you prepare people for such change? I think the older congregants are going to absolutely flip-out when their plush seats are no longer there. The seats as they have known them for 40 or 50 years are gone when they walk in for Rosh Hashanah. Suddenly the whole room is different. How do you prepare people for that?



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*Adina Hamik:*

This is actually our biggest initiative for the next year. A few things we have learned in the pilot program through trial and error is that whenever you start a new project you have to get as many people as possible on board from the very beginning. You start them thinking, "you know, it would be great if we did this." You bombard them with information, and keep bringing more people into that loop and into that office to talk about the whole feeling. I compare the change process to the Wilderness experience. Many times we think, 'oh we want to get to the Promised Land, right', and we forget all about that Wilderness – part of the experience. You have to let go of the past and you have to have a time of grieving and of saying, "you know what, I'm not going to like this." You have to give congregants the opportunity to go through that process. If there is anything we've learned, it's that we would actually model it differently as we take on Washington, D.C. We're getting much more of each congregation involved from the very beginning rather than waiting a year. In many previous situations we've told them to do it through bulletins, but that's not enough.

*Hazzan Lippitz:*

Adina, thank you very much.

One of the things that personally gave me great confidence that this project was going to work was that a big chunk of money went initially not just to fund conferences and materials and develop curriculum, but to hire a professional change manager. The kind of person who consulted to the Fortune 500 corporations was hired – Karen Barth- she left them and went to work at CJJE – Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education. Karen is the change consultant to this project, and because she is, we have all learned to be patient. Change consultants who consult to major companies tell you that real change – significant long lasting change – takes 5 to 20 years. So chances are that what you're working on now, will still come to fruition in our lifetimes. But anyone who thinks that they can make a fast switch and make it work is bound to have problems. And the real influence, if you can be patient, you'll hear about later. It's a critical piece of this project, this managing of change and the fear of change – the fact that even when congregations know that something is not working, they don't want to change it. The fear of the unknown is worse than what they know is not working, and here is Ramon Tasat to talk more about that.

*Hazzan Ramon Tasat:*

The coming of the millennium is the light ahead that signals us to take our pulse and see where we are. Because when you see the small percentage of Jews who are affiliated with a synagogue, you see right away the problem. We heard Abe Shapiro talk yesterday about how Federations and other community organizations survive off of our synagogues, and not the other way around as some of their leaders would like us to believe. But when we approached the leadership in our congregation and suggested we go out and see what people are doing, what do they want, we never asked if anybody wanted the program. We just said, "hey, here's a great program," but we never asked if anybody wanted it. Of course we want people with liturgical comprehension and understanding and we want them to participate in adult education. But we're still not asking them what's wrong with the service or with the class. As long as we fed them, they came to Friday Night services. But the minute we stopped feeding them, they stopped coming – "the Kiddush is better at Beth El, I'm going to Beth El." This process is very hard for us. It takes more time and more tolerance and there

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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are a lot of things we don't want to hear about ourselves and about our congregants. But if we don't listen to those things, then how will we bring them closer to Torah?

### *Hazzan Lippitz:*

What percentage of the people we currently serve will still be there 20 years from now? When we talk about the Cantor being in jeopardy, it's partly because if there aren't enough people to fill synagogues, there's no reason to hire *Hazzanim*.

### *Hazzan Tasat:*

We have lots and lots of issues, let me try to respond to that one and some others. It's very interesting, as congregations today are beginning to look at the difficulty of what you're mentioning, in this manner. Instead of asking people to pay a fixed dues, they're asking them to bring an offering. They're asking them to say, "instead of telling me what you want from the synagogue, tell us what you can bring." Actually, I think there are some provisos to this, and that is the hard part. When you're talking about financial issues everybody trembles. If we're telling people to bring an offering, money they will decide to bring by themselves, you're not so sure they're actually going to do that. Some synagogues are succeeding by not having any dues at all. In order to do that, people need to feel that the synagogue is theirs. If you have that, then people feel that it's worthwhile, that they want to be there.

I think that as *Hazzanim*, we have a responsibility to get to know our congregants well enough that you shouldn't have to send out a survey. After all, on a survey you will get your typical responses. We have a responsibility to know our congregants. One of the reasons you're there is to engage them in conversation, to be there with them, to be able to develop that relationship and develop a sense of why people are here, what are their needs. I think that's an important part of who we are.

### *Comment from the floor:*

I'd like to offer an analogy – what happens when you feed a baby? What happens when the baby isn't hungry – it knocks the food on the floor. I think it's an excellent metaphor. This is the way I see it, not just in my present congregation but in the two previous one that I worked at. Most of the ideas that I've heard represented here today are already in place: we have friendly ushers who help people find their way; there's no question as to where the sanctuary is; all the things you've mentioned, we've tried and yet the large majority of the congregants don't care! They only want the synagogue there for their Bar or Bat Mitzvah or their weddings or their funerals. I can't see how changing the way clergy reacts and thinks and talks and sings or rearranging the layout of the synagogue is going to change the mindset of these people.

### *Hazzan Tasat:*

We'll have to come back to this challenge. But I'd like to add something to the metaphor of the baby. Sometimes the baby has some problems with coordination. I think we have to recognize not only what the needs of our congregants are but also where they can't tell us their needs. Then we have to step in. The synagogue is a funny business, because all the congregants are supposed to enter knowing everything about it. If you go to a computer store you can pretend to be dumb, and that's O.K. But in the synagogue you can't pretend to be dumb because you're labeled 'dumb'. Why can't people just walk into a synagogue?

*Hazzan Lippitz:*

I think the question is excellent and reminds us why adults who are competent and successful in every other aspect of their lives might not find it pleasant to spend two hours in a place where they can't read the right-hand side of the prayer book, they don't know the melodies, the pages are seldom announced and they feel like fools. Very few of us would spend regular time in a place in which the feelings we have about ourselves turn that way, even if we have some nostalgic feel for the place or thought we ought to be there on Yom Kippur. But that is exactly what their response is.

I'd like to read you what I think is one of the most succinct statements about what you are saying. One of the premises of this project is that the current synagogue is fashioned in a manner that reflects a 1950s corporation and not the kind of spiritual community that – not just Jews – but the Christian world as well is looking for in the 1990s. What we are experiencing in our synagogues is part of a much larger national trend. Those who see the big ads for seeker services know that the only groups that are losing out right now are liberal Protestants, and the groups that are gaining are the ones on the two extremes of worship: fundamentalist or experimental. We're not going through this alone. What is exploding in certain parts of the country are these seeker services where people are walking off the street and get love bombs in a religious setting, as individuals and within the service. I have to tell you, every congregation that has been going to some of these seeker services have said, "this model ain't gonna work for us Jews," at least not for traditional Jews. We have to learn something from this. Our people, our youngest clientele are part of the same wave and they're looking for something and somehow the answer we're giving is not the answer to the questions they're asking.

*Hazzan Tasat:*

Also, we have to understand, we have to really internalize that we are not well. This is something that I think a lot of people can forget. We are not doing fine. People are saying that their congregations are flourishing, they are doing great. And you know better than that. You may not know the statistics very well, but maybe 10% of all Jews ever go to synagogue in their lives. Maybe a little higher, maybe 13%. We are talking about something that is important. What we were doing until two years ago just wasn't working. So, at least we have to try.

Another thing that is important – one of the elements I think we should talk about sometime, I think, is between 'us' and 'them' – clergy and congregants. You know, it's not 'us' and 'them'. This is the same company. We are all working for the same thing – empowering congregants to do what we do even though they're not going to do it as well as we do it. Whatever their understanding of what is happening, the feeling of joy that being able to read Torah or lead the service produces is important. So is knowing that they are capable of doing those things and that they are not there just for the few elected ones that have the power of bringing their wisdom and experience. This is important.

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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### *Comment from the floor:*

This kind of presentation should be done at Rabbinical Assembly Conventions, at United Synagogue conventions, at Women's League conventions – these are the people that need to be hit real hard with this.

### *Another comment from the floor:*

You are saying all the things that I've been thinking. I'm a Hassid of the project. Now I've got to go back to my congregation where my rabbi wants to be in the spotlight all the time. If I say that I want to bring in something, he will shoot it down because G-d forbid that I should distinguish myself in any way, bring something positive to the congregants. I'm sure I'm hitting a nerve. What's the strategy – what should I do?

### *Another comment from the floor:*

To take it a step further, is there anything going on that's 'Congregation 2000'? Is there an obligation for the entire congregation – including its staff of professionals to meet certain points?

### *Hazzan Lippitz:*

Each congregation is going to have to figure out what the mission of their community is. Part of the mission of the community has to be to define what a person who wants to be part of the community can do. Different communities set different standards.

I also think we ought to consider music. That's the piece that you control. It's also a very, very powerful tool. I want to give you a related example. A lot of what Synagogue 2000 does is re-analyze the different tools you use in your synagogue. If you walk into your building and you look around the walls of your building the way you would look around the walls of a person's home, who you had just met, you would immediately learn something by what you see on their walls. Do you see bookcases? Do you see art? What kind of art? Do you see Judaica? Our synagogue walls tell our story, tell immediately who we are. That's an analytic tool for you to go home with. You can start a discussion if you don't like what's on your walls.

Likewise, I want to give you a new way of thinking about music. We're all working in the contexts of *Nusach*, but we are also able to invoke various other styles of music, some with accompaniment, some not. You and I know the debate is often about whether or not we should have a keyboard. Did you ever think about your music in terms of effect? If what we're talking about is people coming with deep emotional, spiritual needs, then one way to look at what you're doing with the congregation is to look at the effect of the music. What part of the music that I sing during a service is majestic? What part invokes G-d on high, that thrilling moment of the transcendental G-d versus the me, lowly but somehow important for being linked? What music is exciting, what music is meditative? When do we use music to help people's 'still small voice' to be heard? When do we give them a moment for genuine reflection as opposed to flipping through six pages of the *Amidah*; have we made a space for that? Have we used music that will enable them to come in and out of that space?

When, in your service, does the music become communally binding and get people to say "I'm not alone, I belong to someone, I'm linked to *Am Yisrael*?" Does the music get people to sing something all together; does it get the person who knows the least Hebrew join in? Is it really accessible to 90% of the folks in the room? And what kind of music is

memory music? What invokes nostalgia? What kind of music will remind a congregant of sitting next to their grandparents? Why does Kol Nidre work? We all know that it evokes majesty. You could even argue that it evokes memory. These are some of the effects of music. When you start to analyze your services you may find that you have a disproportionate amount of two or three of these and very little of others. For a successful emotional experience you have to have a little bit of everything and you have to weave from one to the other.

These are the areas in which sometimes we as *Hazzanim* have total control. These are our tools.

How do you teach music to a congregation so that they take responsibility? What are the ways you can teach and involve them so they not only participate but take responsibility for making something happen in the room? How do you talk to them about that? Can we help them find their voice? Some folks in synagogues are literally doing workshops that are entitled 'Finding your Voice'. What a powerful concept for so many people who feel they aren't supposed to sing. Something happened in their lives and they don't think they're supposed to sing or perhaps they simply can't sing in your key.

*Hazzan Tasat:*

There is this element that is so simple, yet so profound. How many of the congregants that you know are told or know that there are words that they should answer to whatever you're doing. How many of them say *baruch hu uvaruch shemo* at mention of G-d's name? How many of them actually participate in this manner? How many of them really answer *baruch adon-ai hamvorach le'olam va'ed* in the way you would expect actual prayer to begin? When you look at the most important thing, you would agree with me that the *kri'at shema* is perhaps the central moment of Shabbat morning. How many of your congregants actually have a meaningful experience of the reading of the *ve'ahavta*, even if they don't understand a word of what we're saying? I think this will give you a flavor of what you were referring to.

*Hazzan Lippitz:*

You can tell that there are more great ideas and more questions in this room than we could possibly reveal in an hour. We are morally bound to make room for the next set of workshops. I hope that this has proven to be a provocative session for you. I hope you will access this Web site and ask them for certain materials that are open to anybody. I ask, before we conclude, that if you learned four things that you could walk home with – that you put your name on a list here. I'm going to call one thing 'Imagine and Ethnic'; if you began thinking about that just put your name on the 'Imagine and Ethnic' list. Just print your names so I can hand this to Adina. The second list is 'Game and Music'. 'Game and Music' is a packet that has sample pages for you about actualizing how your building feels when you walk in, how to think about Shabbat as if it were set up like a football game. Are people coming for the game or are they coming for the *Oneg*? What's important to them? Why did they come to *shul* today? And it includes the place of music that we only very briefly discussed. I have some copies up here and I invite you to put your name on a list for the others.

I want to finish with reading something to you that I think encompasses the thrust of the approach of this project. And please know that the project is expanding as to how to do

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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business not just when a person walks into the *shul* but once that person goes home and calls the administrator expressing interest, what is said to that person? In most congregations in this country, the person would be sent a financial statement and asked for a name, an address and how much they are ready to give. If you want to join us, here's what you have to prove. That's all they're sent. A financial statement is often the top piece of paper in what they are sent. I know that my congregation - thank G-d they stumbled onto this project - sends nothing financial in the first information that's sent to a prospective congregant. That has to come much later, otherwise we're sending the wrong message. Things like that. The project is about doing synagogue a whole different way, that's what makes it so exciting. We can only change the world in our little place.

### *Hazzan Tasat:*

I think what's very crucial for you to understand is you are not, not you or anyone, able to immediately solve different problems that will confront you, perhaps not even in a few months. If you stumble on something, it doesn't mean that the whole idea is not a good one. What it means is that you have to try and look at it in a different way. It's going to be painful and difficult, but after all there is something we can gain. The important thing to remember is that what we are doing now is not really working for us.

### *Hazzan Lippitz*

Thank you, Ramon. I would ask that all of you please take the time to speak to Melanie Fine, to Ramon Tasat, to Joel Caplan, to Lorna Wallach, those folks that are here at the conference who are involved in the project. Let me read you something that I think encapsulates both the challenge of our work, and its hope. This is from Larry Hoffman's article **Imagine**.

"It is not self evident that synagogues need corporate flow charts and rule by committee, largely a legacy of the 1920s when synagogues learned efficiency training. But with efficiency came a division of labor between management – the clergy and staff – and synagogue boards. Boards held management liable for marketing and selling Judaism to members who were often seen as a 'market' buying synagogue services with description packages called 'dues' and 'contracts'. Today there's a call for spirituality, a response to an age of freedom where even the healthiest adults want to know their lives have shape, that some values are eternal, that intellectual pursuit of ultimate questions is not in vain. It is a conviction that where mandated communities called families have collapsed, communities of choice called synagogues can be centers of vision, hope, insight and care".

"A synagogue for the year 2000 might be driven by a vision of becoming a post-ethnic and a post-pediatric community catering to spiritual needs and offering honest human care... Our road to synagogue re-spiritualization encompasses a number of areas, among them prayer. In a synagogue where ritual rings true, it is human nature to want to ritualize our lives, hence our fascination with birthday parties, sports extravaganzas, or gala openings. But religious ritual should go deeper, connecting us with G-d and history, filling us with hope, enlarging our vision and expanding the circle of people we call our own. Many synagogues are refashioning their services to do just that. In others, worship is sparsely attended, why they proceed is irrelevant, distant and dull. Ritual there is like a distant movie about the things that count, not an immediate experience of them. People find its language banal, its music unrecognizable and its purpose baffling. They enter as strangers, sit with people they



do not know and leave untouched. Synagogue 2000 will feature prayer that is engaging, empowering, participatory; that will celebrate the wholeness and mission of the community. It will supply the caring link among members and the potential to make a difference in the world."

Shalom.

### **Moshe Ganchoff Remembered**

**Hazzanim Jacob Ben Zion Mendelson and Noah Schall, Mr. Barry Serota**  
**Chair: Hazzan Robert Kieval**

*Hazzan Robert Kieval:*

If I were paranoid I would think that someone is trying to sabotage me. This is the second year in a row that things got messed up. Unfortunately, this session was on every schedule except the schedule in the hotel, so they had nothing prepared. But, all you have to do is talk to the right people and they seem to have gotten things together.

For this session they originally asked me to put together something of a memorial to Moshe Ganchoff. I didn't want it to be a memorial, that's why we have called it a Remembrance. We are going to remember him as the great artist and creative *Hazzan* that he was. We've put together a few different elements. As you will see, there are some boards over there with pictures and clippings and in the corner is *Hazzan* Ganchoff's robe and some of his hats and a Tallit that you'll see in one of the pictures over there. They are for looking at, so please don't take them.

One humorous story. When I became President, the first Board meeting was in Washington, and I had the whole Board over for dinner. I put a stack of music on the piano in a specific order and as the evening went on I went to see whether anything was missing. Nothing was missing because there wasn't anything worth taking, but the order of everything changed every time I looked at it. So, we know what's there and we have electronic detectors all over the room so if you try and take anything, they'll get you!

I didn't want this to be a sad thing because Moshe's life was not sad. Even though he passed away at the age of 92 or 93 or 91, whatever. There was a debate as to what year he was born – 1904? Well, sometimes it says 1905. O.K., we'll have to take it to the *bet din* to get it settled. I think that the important thing to remember about him is what he did in all the years that he was creating and his creative talents did not end until a week before he passed away. I first met Moshe Ganchoff in 1960. It was at a concert at New York's Town Hall and he was *bench'n* the Chanukah *licht*. That's the only thing I remember about the concert. I was 14 years old and I was brought to that concert by Charlie Bloch, who was my mentor and also the *shadchan*. My first introduction to Moshe Ganchoff was when I – as a groupie – went over to him and said, "Hazzan Ganchoff, it is an honor to meet you." And his response to me, in his own inimitable way was, "Don't call me *Hazzan*, it's Mr. Ganchoff!" And through the years when I was his student our relationship grew and he still had his aserbic wit until the very end.

Jack will tell you a story about when he visited him in the hospital. The thing about him that was unique was that he would be able to look at music – no matter whose music it was – read through it, digest it, and put it out again as something entirely new. He would take a phrase from here and a phrase from there and somehow or other he had this great intuitive capacity to turn something that was maybe just mundane into something that was terrific.

I'm not going to take a lot of your time because I'm only the chairman of this session, but I put together this little thing that says 'In Rememberance of *Hazzan* Moshe Ganchoff' and you have the list of the funeral program and this is the eulogy that I delivered at the funeral. It is just for your edification, if you would like to read it. Attached to that are some

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pages of music and that's what we're going to look at first. Moshe had a radio program every Sunday morning for 20 years. Every weekend he needed to produce something new. He was very eclectic and was able to find things to re-work. I'm now in the process of sorting out his library. I loved Moshe very much, but organized he wasn't. So I started to look through the music and there's a page of this here and a page of that there and luckily my wife is not here because she would tell you what our dining room table looked like when I emptied all this stuff and tried to sort it out.

Amongst those things I did find this piece, 'Oz Bahaloch Yirmiyahu,' which is part of the *Kinot* from Tisha B'Av and it's in the handwriting of Yisrael Alter. You'll notice that it says at the top that it's by Baruch Schorr but Alter altered it – he made an 'Alteration'. This was the original Altered piece that obviously Alter gave to Moshe. The next set is two pencil sketches in Moshe's handwriting that he made for the radio program. The next two pages are notations of exactly what he sang on the radio. There are three copies: one is in Alter's handwriting, one is in Ganchoff's handwriting, and one sounds very much like Glantz. Glantz questioned Alter whether the original from Schorr had that phrase, because it's typical of Glantz, you understand what I'm saying? By *ve'aye havtachat*, you don't hear that too much. So Glantz questioned Alter if maybe he doctored this number. It sounded like Glantz, and naturally, Glantz didn't want to say he adapted it or he thought of this same phrase, but it's an interesting phrase. I suggest that you either look at the pencil sketch in Moshe's handwriting or the written out version. I am now going to play the tape of a radio broadcast which matches the second two groups of pieces that you see.

*Comment from the floor:*

A few tiny comments. First of all, Ganchoff usually sang this piece on the radio either on Tisha B'Av or the week before. Either he sang this version, or the version by Zeidele Rovner. Zeidele Rovner used to say *kinot* on Tisha B'Av, and they charged a quarter per ticket. In the choir all the great *Hazzanim* sang free for him because he was a very poor man at the end, and on a lot of days he hardly had what to eat. The reason that the piece was changed by Moshe – we'll consider the first page as original – was because he had to sing it on the radio. On the radio you only have a certain amount of minutes – he could not sing the whole thing. The whole thing is too long. But something in the beginning phrase he left out on purpose, there's a certain maneuver there that you don't hear now. You could hear it in Pinchik, who could be in two keys at the same time. *Kinot* in the morning usually end in the *Freigish mode*. There are other possibilities too. Beginnings are usually in minor. So what some of the old *Hazzanim* would do, instead of beginning in the minor, they would start in *Freigish*. In other words, before you start riding the car you turn around to see what's in back of you. Glantz would also do it. If on Friday night he would sing *Kol Hashem*, he would start in major because the paragraph before was in major, and *Freigish* also has the major third. Moshe did not sing it that way because on the radio he did not need continuity with the paragraph before. And looking at the manuscript of his radio broadcast we might think he made a mistake.

*Hazzan Kievel:*

I want to leave the other participants some time, but by the graciousness of Peggy Ganchoff I've xeroxed a few things for you. There's a *Hallel brachah* in Moshe's handwriting and then there's another one – a longer, more elaborate one – in Noah Schall's

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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handwriting that Moshe created for me 25 years ago. He just added this Hallel *brachah*. Then there's this *B'tseit Yisrael* which is a combination of Ganchoff and Jacob Rappaport. We wanted you to have some momento of the creativity of Moshe Ganchoff.

Now, I'll turn over the program to Jack, who has some other material that he'd like to talk about.

### *Hazzan Jacob Ben Zion Mendelson:*

Thank you Robert. I just want to spend a few minutes demonstrating some of Moshe's favorite phrases. We're talking about two phrases here – two amongst 5,000, but these are a couple of his favorite phrases. I entitled it 'When Moshe Ganchoff prays', meaning that no matter what he did, when he got to a part of the prayer where real *t'fillah* was called for, the *t'fillah* really happened – they called it a *d'veikeh*. The first example comes from *Tamachti Yeteidotai*, which brings back a lot of memories for me because it's the first Ganchoff piece that I ever learned. That Tikva recording with the red and white stripes – I wore out the record. It didn't take me too long because in those days there were no cassettes and I just wore it out. There were things on there that just blew me away and that *Tamachti* was so interesting. I couldn't find the accompaniment, and I got ahold of my pianist, Linda Hall, and we listened to the recording and the two of us together wrote out Jack Barris' accompaniment and then I sang it for the first time in Albany when I was a kid at a concert. In the middle of the piece he goes, example one: *shetasim dim'oteinu* – now here it is... *Y'hi ratson, ratson l'fanecha*. And this has all kinds of uses. Last night in Carnegie Hall I sang it during the *Atah Yodei'a Razei Olam*... And now I'll defer to Noah Schall.

### *Hazzan Noah Schall:*

As most of you know, Moshe Ganchoff grew up in Toledo. In Toledo there were two great *Hazzanim*. One was Tzemachson, who was a teacher and a composer and supplier of music and choral music. Moshe's first teacher was Tzemachson. Tzemachson had three different styles combined, plus his own. If any one of you look at Weintraub's music you'll see there's an upper line and a lower line at the same time – in other words, you have a choice – either sing all the coloraturas on top or sing the simpler lower ones. It's like when you read in the Torah a choice between *ta'amei elyon* and *ta'amei tachton*. The *elyon* are more exciting because the notes are higher. Anyhow, if you examine Tzemachson's music, you'll see that he wrote many phrases in two voices – the top one has the coloratura, which is very similar to Weintraub. So you have, in Tzemachson, a touch of Weintraub. And Tzemachson himself was a Chasid of *Hazzan Aryeh Leib Rutman*, even though Aryeh Leib Rutman came to him for some pieces. And he was also very wild about the *Hazzan Yechiel Karniol*, so in Tzemachson's music itself you already have this combination of Weintraub, Rutman and Karniol.

Now Moshe sang in the choir and studied *solfeggio* when he was a kid. When Moshe was going to be Bar Mitzvah, Tzemachson wrote out for him a whole *Ma'ariv*. In this *Ma'ariv*, which Moshe used to sing for me, you have elements of these three. You have a little bit of Rutman, you have Karniol and you have Weintraub. So you see how this crept into Moshe. When Moshe started to become famous in the 1940s the *alte meivinim* would say, "who does he sound like?" One great *meiven*, his name was Kaplan, he was a Chasid of Herschman and Roitman. If Roitman gave a concert he made sure he carried the music [and

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an apple, Roitman ate an apple every day]. Kaplan thought Ganchoff sounded like Hershman.

But Moshe as a kid of 13 already had a touch of Weintraub and he already had a feeling for Rutman and Karniol. In the other part of Toledo was a very great *Hazzan*. His name was Mendel Shapiro. He died recently at about 104. Mendel Shapiro had a voice to High C with a tremendous coloratura a la Karniol. Tremendous coloratura, and he was a tremendous improvisor. Moshe was attached to him, and he showed Moshe orally certain *kneitcher* in a weekday Mincha daven' n. He showed him things orally and Moshe picked it up from him. Now, the question is, where did Mendel Shapiro get it from? That's the question, like the whole business we just heard from Jackie, who did it so beautifully. It comes from one of these two. Moshe said that Mendel only spoke about two *Hazzanim*. One was Boruch Dovid Homler and the other was Moshe Bear of Yekatrinislav. These seemed to be the two great improvisors and they had the feeling and the color too. It seems that Mendel Shapiro was influenced by them and he took over their *kneitcher*. So, to guess where this coloratura comes from, I would say from one of these two.

*Hazzan Robert Kieval:*

By the way, Noah Schall is the foremost teacher of *Hazzanut*, the foremost scholar in the field of *Hazzanut* today. There is nobody like him. He is a national treasure. He worked 40 years side by side with Moshe in a partnership. Moshe would invent and Noah would scribble. He just didn't scribble, he would have his own idea and say, "what about that?" and he'd get Ganchoff going in a different direction and they'd play off of each other, do their compositions and all the great legacies of music that have been published by Moshe. It was all done together by Moshe and Noah Schall. And now Jack will continue.

*Hazzan Jacob Zion Mendelson:*

The next *d'veikeh* is my brother Sol's favorite and my favorite, example #2. The first time I heard it was in the *Lema'an Tizkeru*. At my *shul* when I was in Flushing (and you'll see there's a copy of the program) it was a Ma'ariv S'firah concert and Moshe davened with a hat and that whole deal. He sang this *Lema'an Tizkeru* and there were about 800 people there, it was the first time I ever heard it and that was it – it was the end. It's printed here in the Ma'ariv service. He uses it in many places – here it is in example #3 in the *Shelosh Esrei Midot* from a Tara publication book where the *Tumachti Y'teidotai* also appears. Can we all sing that together – that's the one, that's it. Before I end – as long as Noah is here, so I can finish – there was a final coloratura that Moshe used to do and we couldn't find written anywhere, that was very much influenced from Karniol. You find it in *Shacharit* a lot, when you go into the lower 7<sup>th</sup> major triad – *al kol divrei shirot vetishb'chot*. And then he would go into this Karniol thing – *david ben yishai avdecha*.

*Hazzan Robert Kieval:*

I must say that in all the years that I worked with Moshe, it was very interesting. When I lived in New York, it was not a problem because I used to come there and we would sit and shmooze and we'd work, we'd have coffee and we'd shmooze. But, with Moshe, you had to catch him on the right day. There were times when you could sit there for four hours and he'd tell you all kinds of stuff and sing all kinds of things and when we were finished he said, "erase the tape, its crap!" There were other days, when his juices were flowing and it

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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just sort of came out of him. So, you had to have the patience to be able to deal with him and spend a lot of time listening to him. Even when he didn't tell you musical things, everything that he said was of value because he was a connection to a generation before. And on the display boards you'll see the ads from his concerts. In the first one all the way to the left you'll see him with Leibele Waldman, and then with Yossele Rosenblatt – slightly before my time. You could tell that he started way back when. He had all of the material that went before him, inside of him.

As Noah said, he was influenced by people and he absorbed like a sponge anything that was going on around him whether it was old style Karmiol or Mendel Shapiro or Roitman. Later in life, he absorbed modern things too. He was the person that would always survive. Why? Because he was able to adapt to the environment that was around him. That was one of his greatest assets and why even into his 90's he was able to create things that were modern and different. He never accepted the old way just to keep on grinding it out. He was always looking for a new path – to charge ahead into that path and find some different and interesting ways to do it. He once said to me, "if someone can figure out where I'm moving to, then I'd better find another place to move." Because he didn't want anybody ever to know what he was going to do next. Barry Serota is the audio-visual expert of the career of Moshe Ganchoff and he is going to play some examples for us and speak about them.

### *Mr. Barry Serota:*

Over a period of 25 years I've produced Ganchoff recordings of various sorts, many that were made in the studio, as well as others that document almost his entire career. Actually, I'm going to tell you something that I'm sure most of you don't know. The first recording in which Cantor Ganchoff's voice is recorded is not one that anyone actually hears him singing as a soloist. As you may know, when he first came to New York, he sang in Machtenberg's choir. In the late 1920's, Machtenberg recorded a couple of songs with Yossele Rosenblatt, and Moshe Ganchoff is singing tenor in the choir on these recordings from about 1928 or 1929.

He took his first cantorial position in 1928 and in the late 30s he began singing on WEVD on a special-occasion basis on the Forward hour on Sunday mornings. Shortly thereafter, he began his own radio program, which continued until 1964. He began making commercial recordings around 1941 for Ash Records, directed by Moses Ash. Then he recorded for Continental Records, produced by Mr. Don Gabor. He recorded for Banner Records, produced by Seymour Rexite; and for Yuval Records, which is a company that only made two records in its entire history. It was a company owned by Matt Kauffman. He recorded for Columbia Records around 1951, for Tikva Records approximately 1957. Amidst all of this, we have an array of private recordings from various broadcast sources and concerts. Throughout the years I have been traveling, anytime I found a recording with Ganchoff's name on it I would try and get my hands on it, with his approval, and do what we could with it.

Not having discussed these with my colleagues, by coincidence I decided to start my presentation with a couple of examples of typical Ganchoff *dreidlach*. During those years – during the 30s and the 40s – his regular pianist was a man named Harold Green, or Greenblatt. Harold was a kind of Danny Gildar of his era. He was a Julliard piano graduate and he also served as a cantor in Woodbridge, I think – Sons of Israel. He worked on a regular basis. Ganchoff not only used him for cantorial work but I've seen notices for secular



recitals. Ganchoff participated in a program dedicated to songs of Solomon Golub, where he sang a program of Yiddish art songs and Green accompanied him. They would regularly come together and work on various projects. I'm going to give you a little glimpse of Ganchoff and Green together, putting together *ki Vanu Vacharta* for two voices.

As we mentioned, Cantor Ganchoff sang on the radio. He was sponsored by Stuhmers Bread, and many thousands of people heard him. In those days it was very popular for cantors to officiate at weddings, particularly with choirs. And Cantor Ganchoff was among the cantors who was most highly sought after for weddings. It would not be unusual during those years for a cantor like Ganchoff to be doing five weddings on a weekend – Saturday night, Sunday afternoon and Sunday evening – as well as weddings during the week. I want to share with you an excerpt of a live wedding service recorded with Cantor Ganchoff; the responses are conducted by Abraham Nadell.

In the late 40s Cantor Ganchoff served in Newark, New Jersey. At the same time Avraham Shapiro, who was his friend, was serving at Temple B'nai Abraham. They both recorded for a company called Yuval Records that apparently was owned by Max Helfman, and Helfman conducted the chorus on both these recordings. Ganchoff's selection was a lament for the Jews of Warsaw – *Mein Varsha* – and in case any of you are interested, I happen to have the melody line here in Cantor Ganchoff's handwriting.

Through the years Cantor Ganchoff not only sang the recitatives that we have spoken about in the synagogue, but he officiated on a regular basis in synagogues with various choral groups – conducted by some of the finest synagogue choir directors in New York. And I have an excerpt of a composition that you would not associate with Moshe Ganchoff – the Lewandowsky *Zacharti Lach* – and it dates from a broadcast that is from the early 1950s on WQXR, which is not the station that he broadcast on originally. It's a special holiday broadcast featuring the student body of the School of Sacred Music with Max Helfman conducting. As you know, the cantor solo in the selection is very brief, but I just want to share with you Ganchoff's treatment of one of the cantor solos. It would appear that his idea of the cantor's solo is how he would imagine it if Roitman were singing the solo.

On the broadcasts he sang with an instrumental ensemble of approximately 10 musicians. The program was a 15-minute show in which there was approximately 7½ minutes of music. So if he sang a recitative for 4½ minutes, that left only 3 minutes for a Hebrew or Yiddish song. If he would sing *In Cheder* – which takes approximately 4½ to 5 minutes – he would have to sing a very short recitative. If he sang a longer recitative – let's say *S'firah*, which would take more time – for the song he would sing *Lecha Ki Lecha* by Engel. The story was told that Cantor Ganchoff was in the lobby at WEVD and he saw Rumshinsky. Rumshinsky came up to him and asked him, "what kind of junk are you singing today," and Cantor Ganchoff said, "yours!" (He used other language.) In any event, I want to share with you one of Rumshinsky's songs that he sang on the radio, a song for which the music has never been published. It's taken from a Yiddish play called 'The Wandering Jew' and it deals with the idea of a melody that changes through the course of Jewish migration from Eastern Europe to Russia and then to America. I just have a brief portion of it, which is obviously in Yiddish, and the chorus is in Russian.

The music director of the station for many of those years was Nicholas Saslavsky. Many people working with him didn't get along with him too well. They said that since he was a singer he was jealous of other singers. It was said that when many people get up in the morning and have orange juice for breakfast, Saslavsky would have poison. But I want to

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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share with you Cantor Ganchoff's rendition of one of Saslavsky's own songs written for the broadcast – a Purim song.

We spoke before about the influences of Cantor Ganchoff in terms of Karniol and Roitman and Weintraub and Tzemachson, so I felt it only appropriate that we include Cantor Ganchoff's rendition of a portion of the famous *Ki Keshimcha* by Weintraub. I included the section beginning 'man's origin is dust, and it is to dust that man returns'. The performance was from a live concert at Columbia University, a tri-faith concert in 1954 and the chorus is the student body at the School of Sacred Music conducted by A.W. Binder.

If you were to ask Cantor Ganchoff about other cantors of the Golden Era, he had his opinions on all of them. But about one cantor he said, "he sang like an aristocrat," and he referred to Hershman. That was a model that he had in his mind in terms of a certain vocal approach. My friend Alberto Mizrahi was once visiting Cantor Ganchoff on West End Avenue and he was coaching with him *Habet Mishamayin*, and there was one spot where Cantor Ganchoff said to him, "this spot you gotta make the voice sound like Hershman." Our friend Kaplan, the famous *meiven*, would say that there were no *Hazzanim* to come near Cantor Herschman except for Ganchoff. So I just want to give you a little glimmer of Ganchoff's approach in that regard. Here is *meh cheyinu, meh chasdeinu* from *Atah Noten Yad*, a WQXR broadcast with Jascha Zayde at the piano.

On the selection that we heard previously, the Tisha B'Av selection, that was not from one of his regular Sunday morning programs. It was a special broadcast for the Forward. The selection is longer than he would probably sing on one of his own programs. On that particular show – a broadcast from about 1963 – the other selection that he sang was Alter's setting of *Velirushalayim Ircha*. Several years earlier, the *Chazonim Farband* had a concert at Madison Square Garden before an audience of approximately 20,000 people and Cantor Ganchoff sang *Velishalayim Ircha* based on Alter with his own emendations. Here, Warner S. Bass was at the piano.

As a result of this performance, Cantor Ganchoff was engaged to go to the Israel Music Festival. It was the first of about a half dozen tours he made of Israel. Through the course of the years that I've gone to Israel I've always met people who have an interest in *Hazzanu* and they will always tell me the story of what took place at that particular concert series. And the other artists on the program were individuals who had tremendous vocal abilities: Cantor Jacob Barkin, Moshe Koussevitzky. Some of you may know that Barkin opened up the program singing the famous setting of *Uv'chein Yitkadash* with a whole set of extra *dreidelach* he threw in and he finished up on a high C at the end, and as Cantor Ganchoff said to me, "when Koussevitzky heard such vocalism, he turned white." Then Koussevitzky went through his usual, but the people who are talking about the event 30 years later are talking about what Moshe Ganchoff did right afterwards, despite what was going on with these two colossal talents.

### *Hazzan Robert Kieval:*

Thank you, Barry. I'd like to end with a video of Moshe Ganchoff singing at his 80<sup>th</sup>-birthday celebration in Merkin Hall, where you can see what someone who is an octogenarian sounds like when his heart is half the age. Before we play that, I want to thank the participants Barry Serota, Noah Schall and Jack Mendelson. All of us were very close to Moshe and it wasn't always easy, but if you could tolerate watching the football games and



the baseball games and the other games that he watched and discussing the articles in that day's *New York Times*, then you were one of his guys.

There were a few other people that were very close to him. Abe Levitt, who could not be here today, and someone else, Herman Malamud, who was very, very close to Moshe and who was a great talent himself and was a wonderful, wonderful human being. Unfortunately, he was taken from us quite young. But the one who really deserves all the credit for Moshe Ganchoff living to age 93 is Peggy. Come here Peggy. Those of us that were very close with him know that he wasn't always the easiest person to get along with. But Peggy was not only his wife, his nurse, his cook, his driver, she was his greatest fan. And we know that for her this has been the most difficult thing of all – losing him. Those of us that were close to him are now close to her and as I said in my eulogy, we'll never let her be alone and unchecked on. We hope that she will have many years to come and we will take care of her as she took care of Moshe.

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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### Envisioning the Future of the Cantorate

*Hazzanim* Scott Sokol

Laurie Rimland-Bonn, James Gloth and Larry Goller

Chair: *Hazzan* Sheldon Levin

*Hazzan Sheldon Levin:*

Ladies and Gentlemen, I'm Cantor Sheldon Levin and I'm here in a number of roles. One is that I'm the Vice President of the Cantors Assembly and have spent the last year or two working on a new mission statement for the Assembly. In doing that, we met with every region of the country and got a lot of information about what you want from your organization. It's really clear to me that there are issues that affect all of us and we'd better be thinking about where we're going as a profession. Because if we don't know where we're going, we'll never be able to get there.

I think this next hour may be one of the most important sessions of this very spectacular week. We are here to discuss the future of the Cantorate. On Monday morning we heard a panel of *Hazzanim* reminisce about previous cantorial experience. Now we will envision where we may be going. After all, the word *Hazzan* might be read as *hazon*, for visionary. While none of us have supernatural powers or use a crystal ball, if we do not plan for the future we will always be reacting to events rather than helping to shape them. As an educator I've learned that if you fail to plan you plan to fail. So, I've asked today's panel to envision what their career goals are and where we are all headed.

As a cantor for 24 years, I've seen changes already in our synagogues and profession. Technology such as tape recorders and computers are everyday tools that were unheard of three decades ago. Many of us are more involved in adult education or pastoral work than were our parents' generation. It's not unusual to see cantors as choral conductors – of not only liturgical music – but of all kinds of Jewish music in our *shuls* and our community choirs. Some cantors are also educational directors and others involved in work with children, including teaching in day schools and summer camps.

But I also worry about our calling. As officers visited every region this year, one issue we heard throughout the country is the problem of synagogues hiring part time – often unqualified people – and calling them their cantor. We know that the late Friday night service with its rich musical repertoire is often being replaced with an early service with no time for special programming. The B'nai Jeshurun style service, with young people dancing in the aisles, is attracting attention in several communities. We question what the role of a cantor is in that service, and whether it is authentic, or just another fad like the Rock services of the late 1960s. For my congregation's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year I wrote two extensive articles. In one I reviewed how the synagogue service has changed. For instance, we no longer have an organ or a professional choir on a regular basis. We do have one on the High Holidays. For many decades, those were an integral part of the prayer experience. Alternative Havurot have shown that you do not need a rabbi or a cantor to have a successful service. Congregational singing is now a buzz word, along with words like participatory and spiritual. While I believe that services have always been spiritual and have included congregational participation, people seem to be asking for something new and different. The other article was a whimsical one, fantasizing what my synagogue will be like 60 years from now. *Moment* magazine recently had a series of articles by Jewish leaders expressing their views of Judaism 50 or 100 years in the future.



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Today we've invited four cantors who still have long careers in front of them to speak about their thoughts of the future. Each has come to the cantorate with different backgrounds and life experiences. One is an educator, one has a medical background, one has studied religion and one has been in the computer and business world. Yet each has chosen to make the cantorate their profession. All four are bright, talented and articulate and will share their visions for the future. My hope is that before the hour is up, we will have time for questions in this discussion, so that together we can plan to make the cantorate the kind of profession we want it to be. We're going to start with Scott Sokol from Brookline, Massachusetts.

*Hazzan Scott Sokol:*

When Sheldon asked me to speak about the emerging paradigm for the modern day cantor, I thought to myself that this is a very difficult charge since what characterizes today's professional *Hazzan* is nothing if not incredible variety. This variety, though, I realized was in a sense itself a brief departure from my remarks. Today the *Hazzan* has unprecedented opportunity for a full partnership with clergy or other professionals that he or she serves. The reason for this level of partnership, I believe, is by and large due to the increases in the educational backgrounds and breadth of experience that many of our members now possess.

As you all know, a cantorial graduate of JTS will have about twice the courses of a rabbinic student, compressed into the same 5 year period – and will graduate with analogous degrees – a Masters of Sacred Music, and cantorial investiture in place of rabbinic ordination. In many cases, including my own, the modern day cantor will have come to cantorial school with a range of outside experience and professional history – which again can serve to improve his or her image in the eyes of colleagues and community. In my own entering class of six at JTS, only one student came straight from college and even this student (who is sitting in this room) considered enrolling in a Ph.D. program in philosophy before deciding to start at JTS. Of the remaining class, we had a physician, a neuropsychologist, and a student who came with a master's degree in special education – to name just three. And while in school, many of our students choose to complete dual masters programs in Education or Bible.

This unprecedented level of formal education in the cantorate brings with it enormous possibilities and speaks to a growing trend towards combined positions in the synagogue and communities we serve. In my own case, coming into the cantorate with a doctorate in neuropsychology and several years of higher academia, I found an interesting niche where – in which addition to my pulpit responsibilities – I administer a graduate program in Jewish Music and teach in that program. I serve as the assistant conductor of the Zamir Chorale of Boston, and still manage a small clinical practice as a psychologist. Most of this variety is for me a choice, but certainly the market has something to do with it, as Sheldon alluded to just a minute ago.

More and more of our members are finding it necessary to combine roles, either within their synagogues or outside within the broader Jewish community, in order to meet their economic needs as well as the needs of the congregations they serve. The most frequent combinations are probably *Hazzan/Ritual Director* and *Hazzan/Educational Director*, of which I myself know about five just in the general Boston area. We're able to do these jobs and we're able to do them well because of the excellent preparatory educations we've received at JTS and at other institutions. More important than the flexibility that our educations allow, I think the most important change in the modern cantorate is the level of

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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partnership that many of us are enjoying with our rabbinic colleagues by dint of our educational experiences.

I consider myself very fortunate to be among such *Hazzanim* in that I have a great colleague. We've abandoned the 'you speak and I sing from opposing sides of the Bimah' kind of philosophy. I often give *divrei torah* and Bill teaches an occasional Trop class or leads a prayer. We still clearly have our areas of expertise, to be sure, but we also appreciate the knowledge and experience the other possesses and are perhaps a bit less threatened than was the case in the generation before us – maybe because of our more even playing field. More importantly, off the Bimah we work together completely. We plan the vision for our community together, we restructure Board committees, and we work together with lay leaders. We write grants, we plan cultural events in cooperation with one another. Every aspect of synagogue life in which one of them works, the other is at least aware of what's going on, if not closely involved with the project. Although to be sure, there are always going to be rabbinic colleagues who fail to appreciate the full range of what *hazzanim* can offer to our congregations. I think many more, especially of the recent generation, are slowly getting the picture that our role is not simply supportive but truly complementary. And that when we work as a unit, the whole of our abilities and efforts really can be greater than the sum of their parts. I hope that will continue.

### *Hazzan Levin:*

Laurie Rimland-Bonn from Burbank, California.

### *Hazzan Laurie Rimland-Bonn:*

Hello, it's nice to be with all of you this afternoon. I want to speak about my own personal experiences and how I view the cantorate, how I became interested in it and I think that applies to how I'm feeling about watching the generations come through.

The future of the cantorate really depends on the children of our congregations. It starts at a very, very early level where you follow the children from the day they come into the congregation as an infant. You follow them through the different milestones of their lives. I don't know if any of you deal with the children in the pre-schools of your congregations. I know I do, where there isn't a day that goes by where when I walk into the *shul* I'm not greeted with "cantor, cantor, Shabbat Shalom," and it's Tuesday! They see the cantor and they see the rabbi and its 'Shabbat Shalom' time, it's time to sing Shabbat songs. To them everything has a meaning and a day because the rabbi and cantor were part of their visual range.

I guess being an educator, I think in these terms. I don't think in other terms, I think 'how can I motivate, how can I excite the children' – what was it that I had in my life that I became excited by, that I learned from my teacher? I was very fortunate to have Alan Michaelson as my teacher and my very dearest friend. He was the *Hazzan* from Adat Ariel in North Hollywood, California. I would say that a great number of our colleagues were students of his. He was absolutely the soul of our community, he was the Pied Piper, he was Peter Pan, there wasn't a day that went by that there weren't a swarm of children around him. Even the day he retired, even when he was serving in his emeritus status, the youngest of the young ran to him. When he would sing on Shabbat or during the *chagim* you could feel the *ruach hakodesh* in the room with you. You knew that G-d's presence was in the room.

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There were many of us, not just *Hazzanim*, but *Rabbinim* and Jewish educators and Jewish professionals that still are very connected because of the effect that this one human being had on our life that started, for some, at their baby namings, for some their first day of preschool, for some their first day of religious school – he saw us through every milestone of our lives. He was a consistent presence, not just for us as children, but for the people who were 80 years old. He connected us.

Fortunately, he was my teacher. Fortunately, something rubbed off – it may not be much, but something rubbed off. An awareness of ‘what we have to do to connect people’. The way I look at education. I have a very small congregation, my congregation is under 200 families and we’re in a small community. There are only two synagogues in Burbank – we and a Reform congregation, which was a split-off of our Conservative congregation. When you look at a small community in a small town, this is really the only Jewishness that it has. Whatever we bring to it has to be for the entire community – it can’t just be for the preschoolers, it can’t just be adult education, it can’t just be Bar Mitzvah training. There has to be something for everyone. The type of educated programs that I do include the entire congregation. When there’s a Passover program it’s not a Model Seder, it’s an Exodus that includes the oldest member of the congregation to a baby in a stroller. We parade through the city of Burbank, walking down the streets and we go from house to house to different members within walking distance of the *shul*. And we parade these kids from religious school, and the President of the synagogue dresses up like Moshe Rabenu, and the Rabbi is Miriam – because we have a lady rabbi – and we do all these things as a reenactment.

This year we did a program where we took an imaginary trip to Israel. We rented busses; we set up the synagogue like an airport. I had the characters of recent Jewish history come talk to the kids, and I went and I contacted the older members of the congregation so the kids could understand that we’re a *kahal*. There has to be somebody to bring the generations together. When you start to educate everybody together, the music enhances the experience. The people want to be together – they see that it creates a sense of *mishpachah* – which is just as important in a small community as in a large community. Obviously you can’t do it if you have two or three thousand families – it’s a little difficult to become more intimate – but it creates a sense of ‘they would never think of having anything in their lives without you being included’. And you wouldn’t think of doing anything in your life without including them.

Congregational life becomes a nurturing parenting – I could say that Michaelson was parenting us – he parented our development. We did these things and we didn’t understand that the rest of the Jewish world wasn’t like this. On Shabbat we would have a junior choir rehearsal and he would bring salami and a loaf of bread and we’d have salami sandwiches. He’d pile all the kids in the car and drive us all home and we’d sing our guts out on the ride. There was something valuable about that. You look at Nathan Lam. You look at Joseph Gole. You look at Bob Scherr. We are all a product of that. Something that Alan gave us worked. I elaborate on it and I say ‘it’s the kids, it’s the kids you have to grab’ and I’ll give you the prime example. Our congregation had *simcha* night – one Friday night was *simcha* night. That didn’t work, so the next year was family *simcha* night – that didn’t work so now it’s *freilach* Friday. It’s the same thing with a new label on it.

We have our preschool children; we created a thing called *tefillah*, just a preschool service for the little kids. We have people in our community who would never set foot in a synagogue if it weren’t for their children who say ‘I gotta go to *tefillah*’. These people come

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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to us and tell us that. They don't want to go to *shul*, "our kids are making us go." If the kids were able to get their parents to bring them, that's an indication that there's something lacking at home. And if the child continues to be excited, then the parents will eventually come along and include and incorporate it in their lives and possibly become part of a *kahal* where they'll want to go to a Camp Ramah experience, or they'll want to go to the Brandeis Institute or they'll want to go and join a JCC.

### *Hazzan Levin:*

Jamie Gloth, who is from Redwood City, California, will share some of his ideas.

### *Hazzan James Gloth:*

Thank you. I wanted to start by mentioning something that I've heard a lot about, in school and afterwards. I graduated from JTS a year ago – so I've been in the pulpit one year full-time, and I had a student pulpit for three years – so this is what I'm basing my experiences on. I heard that the cantorate is dying. Congregations feel they don't need us anymore. What are you doing with your life? You're going to be out of a job in 10 years. So I wanted to start by saying I don't believe that, nor have I ever believed that. I think that music speaks to everyone and we have been entrusted as the guardians and the keepers of our musical tradition. I think that our musical tradition paints our heritage and our history in colors that anyone can understand, at least on some level. Whereas Hebrew may be and probably is a barrier for many of our congregants, I don't think music is. Music can touch people at some level. I think when people think back to their childhoods, to their congregations, they remember the *Hazzan*'s voice. They don't remember the sermons as much as they remember the *Hazzan*'s voice. They associate it with a major part of their religious experience. So therefore I think and I believe that there will still be *Hazzanim* 10, 25 and 50 years from now.

The thing I think we all need to ask ourselves is 'why are we in this profession'? The answer that I come up with is to help bring some kind of significant religious meaning and/or spirituality into people's lives. Rabbis enter the rabbinate for the same reason, I assume. I think we have common goals – to bring some kind of significant religious meaning and/or spirituality into people's lives.

I live in Redwood City now. It's in the heart of Silicon Valley and people are coming there by the dozens – our membership is increasing daily – and we have a lot of new people coming in. I also have to ask the question, 'why do people come to *shul*'? Why are they coming? I think the answer to that is that they want some kind of significant religious meaning and/or spirituality in their lives. However, people are impatient today. I think people have less and less time today – at least they feel they do. Their time is valuable and they don't want to come to the synagogue and sit and watch a show. They can go to the opera, the traveling Broadway show if they don't happen to live in New York – that isn't why they're coming to synagogue. They want to be part of something. They want to be part of the service – and here's the catchword that's got mentioned – they want to participate in some way. I would contend that they need to be led, that's why they hire us in the first place. They want to be led.

We hear all the time, "the answer is educate, educate, educate." Of course I agree with that, but I think that in order to continue educating we cannot try to do it alone. I want to speak for the next couple of minutes about the answer to that – how we can do it, not alone

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– and that is through clergy partners, as Scott mentioned briefly in his talk. I think that we need to become partners with our *rabbis*. Now I've been told that will never happen. Well, I don't believe that either. I've been lucky in my two pulpits in my short career that I have had wonderful *rabbis*. I think that if we continue to build on the foundation laid over the past 50 years by the Cantors Assembly, then we can and we will be partners with the rabbi. I think that the perception of the *Hazzan* is at a place now where we can be clergy partners with the rabbi and I give that credit to the Cantors Assembly.

So then the question is how do we do that? The first thing I think we need to do is to check our egos at the door. Not just us – but *rabbis* as well. Everybody needs to check the ego at the door. I think we have to work together as a team. Neither of us – *hazzanim* or *rabbis* – can do their task alone. We need each other. I think that we need to remember that we're all on the same side. We all want the same thing – we all entered the profession of clergy for the same reason – to bring religious meaning and spirituality to people's lives. The way I think we need to do that is to be part of our congregants' lives. We need to build a good trusting relationship with our congregants. Some things that both the rabbi and the cantor can do – Bar Mitzvah lessons – I think that's a great way to know students and families; life cycle events; adult education; seniors groups; womens and mens groups; couples groups; all kinds of groups – be part of those programs. *Bikkur cholim* and teaching in the religious school – there are different ways we can reach our congregations too. Rabbis can use their expertise to teach Talmud, Torah and other text studies. We can have choirs – these are only examples, they are not everything. Rabbis can reach people by sermonizing and discussing and *Hazzanim* can reach people by *davening* and/or leaning. I think that all these things will do much to create a participatory and knowledgeable laity.

As clergy partners, I think rabbis and cantors need to create a common shared vision. They need to create a vision for the individual congregation in which we serve. Where are we going? Where are our communities going, and certainly a vision for the Conservative movement. We can do this at the Seminary. I think we need to have more joint classes at the Rabbinical school and the Cantorial school. Of course the first thing I would hear in school is, "but we have way too many classes already." I know that I only took one class with rabbinical students and that was in my senior year. I also heard recently that this class – called Religious Leadership – might not be taught to both rabbis and cantors in future years. I think that's extremely bad news and hopefully it's not true. I think that cantorial students need more pastoral training – that was lacking in my education. I think rabbinical students need more *Nusach* and cantillation training. I think this can also continue with the Cantors Assembly and the Rabbinical Assembly. I think it's imperative that we continue to strengthen our relationship with one another. We need to work together as partners on the organizational level. I think we all need to know that we have an advocate, both in the Conservative movement and in our own congregations.

In closing, I think the future of the cantorate as I see it is one of clergy partnership. I think that is where our future lays. I think the *Rabbis* and *Hazzanim* must work together for the sake of the future of Conservative Judaism. Neither of us can succeed alone, but I think we can do G-d's work together. Thank you.

*Hazzan Levin:*

And finally, Larry Goller, currently of Millburn, New Jersey and soon to be Highland Park, Illinois.

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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### *Hazzan Larry Goller:*

When Sheldon told me the topic of this session, I thought, "this is pretty simple; I'll just consult my crystal ball and come up with the answer." I started thinking about what I wanted to talk about. Over the course of the last couple of days here many of my colleagues pulled things together for me. Just as a preface I want to say – I don't have an answer to the question of what the cantorate will look like in 50 years. What I want to do in answering the question is not suggest what the answers might be, and not even suggest how to get there, but maybe some questions to ask ourselves now so that as Sheldon said before, we don't fail to plan for the future. It gives us a framework in which to think about these things.

The first thing I want to talk about are a few things that were said yesterday at the session at Hadesh Yamenu K'kedem that I thought were very interesting and worth writing down. Did you notice that most of the stories and most of the anecdotes and most of the observations made had to do with the livelihood of the people who were there? People talked constantly about how they did a wedding and were paid ten cents or fifteen cents and allowed to eat all the food they could get. One *Hazzan* talked about his first contract and the second one talked about his contract and how he couldn't make ends meet. It occurred to me that after hearing all of those stories – and so many relating to *parnasah* – that the cantorate today is different, in that for many of us – if not for most of us – this is a relatively secure career. I think that for many people this is a career that we brought ourselves to wholeheartedly – and our concerns now are different from the concerns of the people who spoke yesterday.

Another thing that occurred to me was triggered by something said yesterday, and something said very well. One *Hazzan* got up and said, "those of us who were going to become *Hazzanim* – we all knew *chazones*, but we did not know *Hazzanut*. I thought that was a great way of putting that thought. They all grew up in a milieu where they all knew what the old *chazones* was about. Not just them, the people who eventually became *Hazzanim*, but also the people around them – the people that became their *amcha*. Today, and I think we're part of a transitional generation. Today, people don't necessarily know *Hazzanut*, and they certainly don't know *chazones*. And when I say *chazones* I don't just mean its music but I mean the whole history, the whole profession, the whole gestalt of what it means to be a *Hazzan* and what it means for a synagogue, a congregation, to have a *Hazzan*.

And, I want to go to the framework in which I think about the question. Sheldon mentioned that we came from different backgrounds. I was the one who was a computer analyst. My training in school was in economics, so I tend to think in terms of supply and demand. One of the things that I keep hearing people say is, 'we need to graduate more cantors, we need to recruit more cantors, we need to have a lot more people graduate – we only have graduating classes of 4 and 6 and 8 people'. I don't know if that's the case. For example, if we look at a list of congregations that were available this year – even though there are perhaps more jobs than cantors – a lot of 200-or-300 member congregations can't afford to pay a full-time cantor, so they are part-time jobs. So it occurs to me that what we should be shooting for is not increasing the supply of cantors – in other words, recruiting and graduating more people – but increasing the demand for cantors. So that we show the rabbis, we show each other, we show the congregations, we show the Jewish world why they need to have cantors. We show them the importance of *Hazzanut*, the important functions and roles that *Hazzanim* serve.



If we build up the demand for cantors then those 200 or 300 or 400 congregations that can only afford a part-time cantor will say 'we need a full-time cantor'. And I'm thinking of those congregations that when they lose a cantor say, "let's take that money and hire a youth advisor instead" because youth is what's important. If we build up the demand for cantors they'll say, "we need to have a *Hazzan*," and they'll upgrade the positions that are only part-time now and they'll create positions that are not there yet. So then I thought about what we have to do to create the demand. I'm not sure of the exact steps, but I just wanted to put that forth as a question for all of us – not just the leadership of the Cantors Assembly, but all of us going forward. How to increase the number of *Hazzanim* in our present congregations.

Now I want to bring us back to the original topic. I talked before about this being the transitional generation. Many of us here grew up in congregations that had as our role models the *Hazzanim* that we heard from yesterday. They were people who were steeped in *Hazzanut* and people were able to imbue us with that as we grew up. We sort of diverged, in the sense that many of us second-or-third generation Americans came to *Hazzanut* from different backgrounds and from different professions. We come from different backgrounds and with baggage, and we take that baggage and those backgrounds and we assimilate that into what we learn, and then we go off in different directions. So where *Hazzanut* of 50 years ago might have been more integral – we have made it more diffuse and have gone off in different directions. And with our varied backgrounds we are the people teaching the next generation. In the course of the next 10, 20, 30 years the next generation of cantors is going to be more diffuse because they're going to have even more varied backgrounds and they're going to be one further step removed from the experience of the first-and-second generation Americans who really grew up with this stuff.

Another way of looking at it is – our parents and grandparents lived and breathed Judaism. Those of us here do also, but we came there because we chose to come there; our family backgrounds may not have been that strong. For the people outside of this room that didn't choose to go into the cantorate, they have less background and they're giving their children less background. That's another way in which this whole body of *yiddishkeit* becomes more diffuse and what we need to do now – looking forward into the future – is figure out how are we going to pull it back together again. Not in the sense of becoming more single minded in what we represent – but in terms of bringing a background. You can't instill in people what their grandparents and great-grandparents were. But you can try to bring them back to what their grandparents had. Towards that end, Jamie talked before about education, education, and education. It's true, we have to educate. Can we do that? I'm not sure, and that's a test for each one of us. The goal is that we sow the seed now so that 25 and 50 years from now Jewish educators will not have to teach people from scratch.

Without suggesting how we'll do this, I want to suggest some of the venues. There's been a lot of talk about *Hazzanim* being involved in Camp Ramah. Right now it's something that a lot of people talk about. I think it's something important. Those people that are going to be involved in Judaism and are going to be the most knowledgeable Jews in the next generations will be people who have come out of the Camp Ramah movement. We as *Hazzanim* need to have a greater presence in Camp Ramah. If you look at the typical Camp Ramah, there are plenty of rabbis and plenty of rabbinical students – maybe there's one *Hazzan* or a cantorial student. Most likely not in most Ramahs. Many people who go to rabbinical school go because they went to a Camp Ramah where there were rabbinical students or rabbis. Those are their role models. What we need to do so that 25 and 50 years

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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from now we've increased the demand and the supply of *Hazzanim* is to have greater representation in Camps Ramah and to show people what a cantor can give you.

Another venue for this is day schools. I get slightly irritated whenever I hear about our local Schechter high school – one track of courses that's taught there is rabbincics. I'm not exactly certain what rabbincics is, or what classes are encompassed in rabbincics. I don't want to sound like I'm rabbi bashing, because I'm not – rabbincics is important. I don't know what the cantorial version of that word is – *hazzanics* – there should be a *hazzanics* track also. There is in some ways. There is cantillation, there's *daven 'n* – these are *hazzanics* – but there's no track called *hazzanics*. There should be a track called *hazzanics* and there should be more that's included in *hazzanics*. What that more is, is something that we have to define for ourselves.

Part of what we have to do in creating this demand is doing a better job of defining what our product is – enhancing, evaluating, re-evaluating, repackaging our product. But we also need to have – in day schools and elementary schools and high schools – a *hazzanics* track. We will then teach people not just what it means to be a *hazzan* – but why *hazzanics* is important. I'm going to emphasize that – not why you need to have a *hazzan*, that comes later. If you learn the importance of *hazzanics* then you know, *de facto*, why you need to have a *hazzan*. Because you learned *hazzanics* in high school and you took two years of it, and although you're not a *hazzan*, you know what you need to have a *hazzan*. Just like you know after taking rabbincics for two years in a Solomon Schechter high school, that although you're not a rabbi, you need a rabbi. So we need to go into schools and camps to show what the subject matter is that we are integral to and can offer.

By virtue of doing those things we will create the demand and also increase the demand for *hazzanim*. We'll therefore increase the supply, because people will say "there's a demand for *hazzanim* so I'll go to cantorial school." And 25 and 50 years down the road, our role as educators will be more and more important. To the extent that people are not going to Ramah and are not going to day school and are getting further and further from the background that I talked about before, we become more and more the professional Jews. We are going to become even moreso. To the extent that people rely on us for that reason, the melding of the roles of rabbi and cantor will become more and more fact, and I think it's more and more important that there are these joint roles. We want to sow the seeds now so that down the road we're not starting from scratch, so that there's a call for what we do, and therefore, there's a call for us.

### *Hazzan Levin:*

Before I turn it over to you I'd like to offer one reaction here. When I invited these four people I had no idea what they would say and I assumed there would be a lot of pessimism, a lot of concerns for the future. I am very optimistic for the future after hearing these people. Having said that, I'd like to open it to the floor. I'd like to limit it only to questions, due to limited time. Does anybody have a question for any of these people here?

### *Question from the floor:*

How do we manage a full-time cantorial pulpit, do all the things that synagogues need and want and we want to give them, and yet have a life for ourselves, and give our own children and spouses what they need from us as well?

*Hazzan Rimland-Bonn:*

You raise a very interesting issue. I suffer with that issue myself. I say that lovingly. A lot of you from the East coast don't know me and the reputation of what I do. For those of you who have come to the West and come to conferences - you know how I became that parent that Alan was to me. It wasn't something that I did on purpose. It just rubbed off on me. I work full time, I run a religious school, I'm the *Hazzan* of the *shul*, I'm on call 24 hours, I have 2 kids - I have a kid that's disabled. I have an autistic child, which is not an easy child to deal with. But, I still have time for my own personal life. I still create that. Why? I incorporate my family in the synagogue family. I still can leave the doors of the synagogue and go home to my house and shut the door and turn it off if I want to. It's an issue of 'do I desire to do that today... or, I want to finish my task, get it off my plate and then I can really enjoy my family'. I see to it that I have time for myself. I see to it that I have time to drive the car pool. I see to it that I have to take my son to behavioral playgroup. I see to all those things.

When I have to figure out what to do with my son and his own individualized education program and deal with the public schools - I do it. Why? Because I want to survive. If the synagogue offers you a package and you need to work full time to support your family, then you have to deal with that. You have to personally come to terms with 'what am I personally going to do with myself'. It is your choice and you have to take responsibility for what you want to do. And there are always consequences... always - it's cause and effect. You're going to take on something - then know what it is, know what it entails first, before you commit. Ask questions. Say, "are you giving me the whole picture, because this is only what I am willing to do for that". Be very clear in your communication with them because once you take the step and you drop one iota - you're dead. Clearly, I've chosen not to do that. I've chosen to be the giver and the nurturer. I cook dinner for my congregation once a year. I do that because it's who I am - it's what I had as a child and it's what I know. It's what works for me. Every individual has to create their persona within their congregation. That's my personality, that's my mothering and nurturing that I give. So, to answer your question - you have to create that for yourself. It's O.K. to say 'no' to something and set limits.

*Question from the floor:*

What's the role of the cantor if everything is either congregational singing or alternative services where they don't want a rabbi and cantor - they want to lead it themselves? Again, where will there be a roll for a rabbi and particularly a cantor in the future?

*Hazzan Gloth:*

First of all, I'm not actually surprised that we're so optimistic. Otherwise I don't think we would have entered this profession. To answer your question, this is exactly what my concern is and why I think it's so important for a cantor and rabbi to create a partnership. And I don't mean finding a good rabbi to work with. I think we could certainly control it earlier on - we can control it in the Seminary. I think that if we have relationships building there between rabbinical students and cantorial students, then that will certainly pour out when we're in the field. I know there are rabbinical students I graduated with that I didn't know until my senior year. I think that's a bad sign. I think that if we build those

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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relationships, then we will have an advocate all the way through. The rabbi will say, "we need a cantor". They will understand why they need a cantor. I think that if we can create a stronger partnership with the rabbinical assembly – 'we' meaning the Cantors Assembly – I think that also can be disseminated throughout the entire group of Conservative rabbis. I think that partnership is vital for what you're saying is going to happen. I think we absolutely have to have the rabbi as an advocate and I don't think we'll be able to succeed without it.

### *Hazzan Sokol:*

I certainly agree with Jamie, but I have a slightly different take. I think the point that Larry made toward the end of his talk is the critical point – which is this notion of *hazzanics* or whatever you want to call it. The rabbis of this world – dating all the way back to the codification of the Mishnah and Talmud – have done an amazing job of P.R. to push their profession. We know this to be true – to put their profession as absolutely essential to the perpetuation of the Jewish people. We have not done so. We can do so, at least to a lesser extent, and we can only do it by doing what Larry says. We have had this knee-jerk reaction that if we teach them everything, they're just going to go ahead and do it themselves. We have converted our knowledge into esoteric knowledge and now no one knows it and they don't know that they don't know it.

That's the critical issue – they don't know that they don't know it. So the only way they can know that they don't know it is by what Larry said, and it's the sense that we have to teach by example and we have to not be afraid to attend a Havurah – and sit back as a member of the *kahal* and sing with them. There's nothing wrong with that. It's important for them to see that we can do that and we get something out of it. Hey – I went to Ramah – I love that stuff. I don't mind a Ramah Minyan, but at some point they also realize that there's stuff that Cantor knows that I don't know, and it's kind of neat.

Just as a very quick departure, I mentioned that I run a graduate program in Jewish music. I had a lot of pressure from members of the Cantors Assembly not to teach *Nusach Hatefillah* in our program. This is absurd. If we do not teach *Nusach*, how is anyone going to know *Nusach*? They're saying, "well, you're going to be training all these people and they're going to go out and take your jobs". Well, in some ways they should know as much as we know about *Nusach* – but it isn't going to happen, don't worry.

### *Hazzan Goller:*

Here are some specific reactions to specific things you said. About not needing cantors in 700-family-member synagogues. Let's take what Dr. Schwartz said yesterday and apply it directly. He said there are more synagogues – and I've noticed this too – that are going to a triennial reading. Why? Because there aren't people who know how to read Torah. Let's teach people how to read Torah. If there are more people who know how to read Torah, if there are more people who learn the joy of reading Torah, if there are more people who know that it's important to read Torah, then rather than there being more and more congregations who do triennial – they'll start doing for a complete *K'ri'ah* because there will be competition between people who want to read Torah.

Another example: *daven'n*. I also have a problem with this. I don't know what the answer is. People say give into it and you'll find it's going to work to your favor. What I do know is what Scott said before is that it's absolutely true – the emphasis is placed on leading services – what is the requirement for leading services? That you can recite the words and

you can sing the melody. Do you have to know what you're saying? No. Do you have to understand why you're saying it? No. Do you have to know the history of what you're saying? No. As one of my colleagues said yesterday, in her *shul* a lot of people *daven*, but she does it better than anybody. And the more people understand what *daven'n* is about, the more people who understand what it mean to be a *sheli'ach tsibbur*, the more people will come say, "you know something, maybe I'm not as qualified to *daven* as I thought I was". By the way, I'm not saying that we should discourage people from being *shleichei tsibbur*, I'm just saying let's raise the ante. Let's tell them 'if you think you want to be a *sheli'ach tsibbur*, then I will teach you about the Amidah, the history of the Amidah. If you want to learn it – *kol hakavod, bevakashah*. You'll learn it, and do it. That's great. But well also then be creating a demand for us to teach people how to do this, and we'll also be creating a demand for us because then people will say, "you know something, there's more to being a *hazzan* then standing up and singing the words".

*Comment from the floor:*

I'm troubled when the cantor is portrayed as a soloist. It's not the cantor/ soloist versus teacher, and to me it's not cantor/soloist versus song leader. I would like to see the *hazzan* as not only the best *davener* in the place, but also the best teacher and also the best song leader. My congregation wants me on the Bimah to teach them how to sing – not only to sing solo. I don't want to see a discrepancy built up in these two avenues because we should be the best in involving other people. It should not be antithetical to what we do – we should be the specialist.

*Another comment from the floor:*

First, regarding Cincinnati – I've been in Columbus since 1982 and that congregation in Cincinnati has had a problem for a long time. It's not just the rabbi issue. Remember also that Cincinnati is the seat of Hebrew Union College which was for many years, because the nature of the Reform movement, an anti-cantorial sort of entity. I'm not aware of any cantors in Cincinnati and it's a big city. I think there may be one or two Reform cantors. So, that's another problem.

In my own congregation, I was called upon during the last year to lead an alternative service, which produced two very interesting things. First of all, it gave me an opportunity to do some of the things in that place that blew people's minds as to what I would actually do. And the things that I could bring to bear. The other thing was the bitter complaints which arose from the people left behind in the main sanctuary, which was kind of lovely because it wasn't my move – I didn't say "oh, please let me lead the alternative service", they asked me to step into it first.

I do have a question. I think, Larry you asked a question and answered a question about some of the alternative significant roles for *hazzanim*, other than congregational. I think that the idea of there being a *hazzanic* position in the Camp Ramah movement, of there being something which we produce through the Cantors Assembly which says, "this is the curriculum which has to be taught in the afternoon Hebrew school, this is the curriculum which needs to be taught in the Schechter school" – I believe that as an organization, it's incumbent upon us to provide the personnel to do that. I would direct this question to you, Sheldon, as a Vice President. What is the possibility of us actually creating a couple of positions in some of the arms of the movement to do just that?

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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### *Hazzan Levin:*

I'll quickly answer because we're running out of time. Jack, I know, is very concerned about having a cantorial program at Camps Ramah. I'll start by making a quick plug and that's that we need to do it. It's not the camp's job to want us – we need to make the time to be a presence at camp. I know that in California they just raised money to have the Cantors Assembly help pay for a cantor or cantorial student as *Rosh Tefillah*. The Cantors Assembly nationally will help subsidize any cantorial student to be in any Camp Ramah in a *tefillah* position. There are ways of doing it. It's not so much curriculum, but it's our personal presence. We could send out tapes, we could send out a curriculum to them, but if we're not there, we don't have that same connection. In terms of curriculum, I think that's a great suggestion. I will bring it back to other officers, we will talk about it. I know that Dr. Steven Brown, who's with the Education School and the Melton Center is also talking about developing new curricula and make sure he has cantorial input into day school, Hebrew school and hopefully Camp Ramah.

### *Comment from the floor:*

I would like to say that it's very possible to turn the very thing that everyone is afraid of – which is that the congregation is going to take over – into our advantage. How do we do that? If you create a lot of congregational tunes in the *Amidah* then the congregation will want to sing those tunes. They will tell the rabbi that they want to sing the congregational tunes. So now you think that since we have the congregational tunes, then we're going to lose our job because they're just going to sing that. The way to fix that is that you have special congregational tunes that have an elaborate *hazzan* part in between, something an ordinary congregant cannot do. By doing that you do two things – first of all, you raise the level of the *daven'n* – make it much more beautiful, the congregational singing becomes much more beautiful because they have to stop and listen to you for a few seconds, at least, and that will tune them up and they'll sing a lot better than just singing on their own. At the same time, they can't live without you. The point is that we really need to encourage compositions which are *hazzanic* for the congregation and I really would stress that in a composition to be very careful about the accent, so we don't have an accent we have to change back and forth. Also at the same time, not to make a tune just to do something. Spend days, hours and weeks until you come up with one composition. If each one of us comes up with one composition like this we don't have to do so many.

### *Hazzan Goller:*

This is directed to Sheldon. I don't know that what I said was meant to be optimistic. I didn't feel optimistic in saying it and it wasn't my intent to be optimistic. It's also not my intent to be pessimistic either. My point is trans-mutual in that I think we're really at a crossroads. It's probably been said 10 years ago and it will probably be said in 10 years, but you know something – every generation is at a crossroads. I think we're at a crossroads because it's up to us to lay the groundwork for what our profession is going to look like in 25 and 50 years. Outside of Synagogue 2000, which was the last session that was in here, Ricki and I were talking yesterday about some of the stuff that Synagogue 2000 is about – we agreed on some of it, we disagreed on some of it – but one of the things that I definitely agree with is, we have to be thinking about where we are, where we came from and where we're



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going, and how we want to get there. As Scott says, the rabbis did a good job at P.R. and steering their own boat. We have to do a good job of steering our own boat, and eventually we'll get where we want to go.

*Hazzan Levin:*

I want to conclude by thanking all our panelists. One last thing – in the Mission statement that we've just completed – there was only one step about planning for the future. We really would like to come up with a strategic plan for the Cantors Assembly in the next few years. We need a Mission statement first. We need a new Executive Vice President. Once we have those pieces in place we can begin planning where we want to be in five years and then figure out how to get there using all of our input. I encourage everyone, whether through *Hazzanet*, calling officers personally, writing letters to the office, or in regional meetings we'll have during this next year – to express your ideas. We want this to be your Assembly, we want the Assembly to serve each and every one of our needs. Thank you very much.

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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### The Hazzan and Jewish Pastoral Care -- What's the Relationship?

Hazzan Alan Edwards

Chair: Hazzan Ed Kulp

#### *Hazzan Ed Kulp:*

Good afternoon. My name is Ed Kulp, and I'm here to introduce my friend and colleague, Alan Edwards. Alan serves as Hazzan of Congregation Ohev Shalom in Wallingford, and as a Mohel throughout the greater Philadelphia area. He's unique in another aspect. He's the first *Hazzan* ever selected by the Philadelphia Board of Rabbis to serve as Chaplain in Bryn Mawr Hospital and at nursing homes in the suburban towns of Devon, King of Prussia, Wayne and Haverford.

#### *Hazzan Alan Edwards:*

When we become sick, we feel helpless, lethargic and extremely weak. We are fed, injected, analyzed, tested, watched over and spoken of behind our backs. It is a gridlock that paralyzes us and makes us feel worse, all too impersonal and conducted at break-neck pace by overworked professionals. This is the point at which medical care breaks down and the **Jewish concept of Bikkur Cholim** (visiting the sick) comes in.

Visiting the sick is a holy duty whose fruits we enjoy in this world while the principal remains for us in the world to come (Mishnah Peah 1.1). Historically there were no hospitals in Biblical and Talmudic times, and hence a person who visited a sick friend or relative had to provide for his or her physical as well as emotional needs. In addition to cheering and encouraging the patient, visitors would cook, clean and perform other tasks as needed. Visitors have traditionally prayed for the patient's recovery, either in his/her presence or not. These three activities, then, the essential components of Bikkur Cholim: caring for a sick person's needs; reviving his/her spirits; and praying for the patient's recovery.

We know that it is our duty to emulate God because Scripture states "you shall walk after the Lord your God" (Deuteronomy 13:5). How is it possible to walk after God? The answer is that we should try to emulate His attributes (*imitatio Dei*). Just as He visited the sick, so too should we visit the sick (Babylonian Talmud – hereafter BT -- Sotah 14a). When did God visit the sick? He called upon the Patriarch Abraham shortly after the latter's Brit Milah (Genesis 17:24) as it is written, "and the Lord appeared unto Him" (Genesis 18:1). According to the Midrash, God blesses bridegrooms, adorns brides, visits the sick, buries the dead and recites the blessing for mourners (Bereishit Rabba 8:13).

It is also written, "and you shall show them the way wherein they must walk" (Exodus 18:20), which the sages interpret as referring to the duty of visiting the sick (BT Bava Kama 100a; Bava Metzia 30b). Another Biblical example of Bikkur Cholim is the prophet Isaiah visiting King Hezekiah when he was "sick unto death" (Isaiah 38:1). The conversation between the two is vividly recreated in the Talmud (BT Berachot 10A), and has a happy upshot. Hezekiah does penitence, is cured of his illness and lives another fifteen years.

The same Talmudic passage also relates that Hezekiah was spurred into praying for his own recovery. He said "please, O Lord, remember how I have walked before You sincerely and wholeheartedly, and have done what is pleasing to You" (Isaiah 38:3). The rabbis ask, what had Hezekiah done that was pleasing? Rabbi Levi answers that he hid the *Sefer Refu'ot* (Book of Cures). The commentator Rashi explains that by hiding a manual of



medicinal treatments for illness, King Hezekiah enabled people to pray for healing from disease. The putting away of this book forced people to rely on prayer -- as well as on medicine -- to find a cure for their illness.

The foregoing should not be construed as discounting the power of medicine. After all, we are commanded to "cause to be thoroughly healed" -- at our own expense -- anyone to whom we have caused physical injury (Exodus 21:19). The sages teach us, however, that medicine alone does not cure, that we must pray for healing (Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 335.4). The foregoing sources further specify that a person who visits but does not pray for the recovery of the ill person has not fulfilled the Mitzvah of Bikkur Cholim.

The Talmud (BT Nedarim 40a) quotes Rabbi Akiva: "anyone who does not visit the sick is as if he has spilled blood." In subsequent discussions the rabbis clarify that statement. "Anyone who does not visit the sick" refers to one who does not in addition request mercy for the individual, through prayer. By not fulfilling that essential part of the Mitzvah, that individual has not helped the patient's recovery thereby spilling his/her blood.

Saying prayers while visiting a patient, not only fulfills a Mitzvah, it gives the visit its proper meaning. Tractate Berachot (32b) declares that prayer is even more efficacious than good deeds because good deeds still require prayer. Prayer alone, however, can pacify the wrath of a king -- which is akin unto death (Proverbs 16:14) -- if it is offered by a wise person. Therefore, advises Rav Pinchas bar Hama, "whoever has a sick person in his house should go to a sage who will invoke Heavenly mercy for him" (BT Bava Batra 116a).

**The purpose of Bikkur Cholim in rabbinic literature** is to hasten the patient's recovery. This is done by helping the sick person to feel better. Visiting accomplishes this in three ways: through presence, prayer and active listening. By the simple act of being there, one brings comfort -- showing that you care -- and in so doing lets the sick person know that s/he is not alone. The patient receives a tremendous boost. The visitor's presence in itself strengthens morale. The visitor should also make sure that a patient is comfortable and that his/her physical needs are being met. Tractate Nedarim (40a) describes how Rabbi Akiva swept the room of a sick student whom he was visiting. Looking after the patient's physical welfare demonstrates concern and caring.

Rabbinic stipulation concerning where a visitor should sit and what language to use for prayer paints a clear picture of God's presence and role in a person's healing. In Shulchan Orech, Yoreh Deah (335.3) Rabbi Joseph Karo advises that a visitor should sit at the head of the bed. He also suggests that "prayers may be said in any language that the visitor chooses because God understands all languages."

The prime source for God's Presence at the sick bed is found in the Genesis tale of when the time came for Israel (47:29-48:27; elaborated in BT Nedarim 40a. As the last of the Patriarchs lies ailing upon his death bed he is visited by his son Joseph, the Viceroy of Egypt. Israel strengthens himself to the point of sitting up as a sign of respect for one who stood "next to Pharaoh," an earthly king. When Joseph accedes to this father's request for burial in the Promised Land, Israel turns to bow down towards the head of the bed, in acknowledgement of the Presence of the King of Kings. The Book of Psalms (41:4) supplies a supporting text for God's presence at every sick bed: "the Lord support him upon the bed of illness; though he lies low Thou recoverest him in his sickness."

For determining the best procedure to follow when visiting the sick we return to the first source from which we derived the Mitzvah of Bikkur Cholim. The narrative in Genesis

(18:1) sets it forth in plain language. “And the Lord appeared to him [Abraham] by the Terebinths of Mamre.” From this verse we learn that God’s character is one of kindness, because He visits the sick (BT Sotah 14a). We are therefore told that we too should visit the sick, because mankind must imitate God’s behavior in order to come closer to Him.

Nachmanides points out that God visits Abraham to honor him for performing the commandment of ritual circumcision on himself, his sons and his household when he was 99 years of age. God’s presence here is simply to visit and be present, because the verse states: “and the Lord appeared.” It does not say “and the Lord spoke.” Thus, the mere fact that a visitor is present in the sickroom already enhances the healing process.

Nachmanides cautions that “a serious illness can lead to death.” Every illness involves judgment. When we are in danger we say that our life depends on God’s judgment. That is why we pray for God’s mercy. The visitor’s prayer should therefore relate to the reason for God’s visit in Mamre: the prayer will be primarily to offer support and comfort. This strengthens the patient’s faith, thereby enhancing God’s honor. Prayer can motivate the patient to reflect on life, to believe more in God.

**In pastoral terms**, just being with a hospital patient or nursing-home resident can have a beneficial effect, for *healing takes place in the context of a relationship*. Translating that into everyday terms we might say that anyone willing to sit at the bedside without an agenda can bring comfort to a person in pain, or to the one who is lonely or frightened. I can attest to this from my own experience in hospitals and life care communities.

Active listening is another important ingredient in Bikkur Cholim. The *Shema* paragraph (Deuteronomy 6:4-9) asserts that we must begin our affirmation of faith by listening. On an outwardly passive level, this would include supporting, comforting, being empathetic, caring, understanding and encouraging. Only a nod or facial expression is needed to convey that we are hearing and connecting with the patient. A more outwardly active level would have us engage in an encounter with the individual: clarifying, interpreting, reassuring, questioning, summarizing and supplying feedback.

A third level would intensify interaction to the following: challenging, confronting, counseling, referring and advising. In addition to hearing words and observing body language, both of which indicate acknowledgement of the patient’s needs and concerns, a visitor’s response should include overall assessment of the patient’s situation. Yet a fourth level would be particularly appropriate for Hazzanim, that of praying, reciting Psalms, touching or holding hands with the patient.

**The Talmud** lists 18 Psalms, any of which might be included in prayers for one who is dangerously ill: 2, 6, 13, 22, 25, 30, 32, 38, 69, 88, 102, 103, 107, 117, 118, 142, 143, 130. Psalm 107: 19-20 is specifically mentioned in (BT Berachot 54b) as proof text for the efficacy of prayer in times of illness. “In their adversity they cried to the Lord and He saved them from their troubles. He gave an order and healed them; He delivered them from the pits.”

One should not visit the sick during the first 3 hours of a day. In the morning, patients look better and feel better than they really are; in the evening the reverse is true (BT Nedarim 40a). Physicians will attest to the accuracy of this statement. Fever is usually lower in the morning, higher in the evening.

One should not visit a patient with illness of the bowel (diarrhea), because of embarrassment. Nor should one visit a patient suffering from eye disease or headaches, because speech is uncomfortable for someone who would rather lie quietly.

Rabbi Samuel said it is better to visit a patient once the fever has subsided. Close relatives and friends should visit first, more distant relatives and acquaintances only after three days. If illness occurred suddenly, all may visit simultaneously (Jerusalem Talmud, Peah 3.17).

No one is obligated to endanger his/her life to fulfill the precept of visiting the sick by coming in contact with patients suffering from contagious diseases. Visitors should protect themselves by taking precautionary steps as directed by medical personnel.

Rabbi Chanina once fell ill and was visited by Rabbi Yochanan, the handsomest man in Pumbedita and the greatest scholar of his generation. He said, "how do you feel?" Chanina replied, "how grievous are my sufferings!" Yochanan said, "but surely the reward for them is also great!" He said, "I want neither them nor their reward!" (Shir Hashirim Rabba 2.16:2).

Another Aggadic (non-Halachic) tale involving Rabbi Yochanan has him visiting an ailing Rabbi Chiyya (BT Berachot 5b). He asked "are your sufferings welcome to you?" Chiyya replied, "neither they nor their reward." Yochanan then said to him, "give me your hand," and he raised him. The meaning: Rabbi Chiyya was thereupon healed.

Rabbi Simeon bar Yochai used to visit the sick regularly. He once met a man, swollen and afflicted with intestinal disease, who was uttering blasphemies against God. Rabbi Simeon admonished him, "worthless one; pray rather for mercy for yourself." Said the patient: "may God remove these sufferings from me and place them on you." (Avot d'Rabbi Natan 4:1)

We are told that when Rabbi Judah recovered from an illness, Rabbi Chanina of Baghdad and other sages went to visit him. They said, "blessed is God who gave you back to us." Rabbi Judah immediately answered, "Amen," and was absolved from reciting *Birkat Gomel* (the blessing of thanks recited when one has survived a life-threatening situation; BT Berachot 54b).

**As Hazzanim**, after visiting congregants in hospitals and nursing homes we have to ask ourselves the following:

- 1) Was I "attending"? Is there evidence that I was actively listening?
- 2) Did I actively encourage the patient/resident and his/her family to contribute to provide their own unique insights.
- 3) Did I actively appear to enter the relationship assuming the "good will" of the patient.
- 4) Did I demonstrate appropriate warmth, closeness, feeling within the relationship?
- 5) Did I provide an empathetic setting for patient and family to express their needs during this trying time in their lives?

*At Day's End*, a contemporary poem by John Hale, express it best.

*Is anybody happier because you passed his way  
Does anyone remember that you spoke to him today?*

*The day is almost over and its toiling time is through  
Is there anyone to utter now a kindly word for you?  
Can you say tonight, in parting with the day that's slipping fast  
That you helped a single person of the many that you passed?  
Is a single heart rejoicing over what you did or said?  
Does the man whose hopes were fading now with courage look ahead?  
Did you waste the day or lose it?  
Was it well or sorely spent?  
Did you leave a trail of kindness or a trail of discontent?  
As you close your eyes in slumber, do you think that God will say  
"You have earned one more tomorrow by the work you did today?"*

Here's my recollection of a pastoral visit. On New Year's Eve a young man was brought into the Trauma Bay at the Hospital for the University of Pennsylvania. He had been walking his dog outside of his home when a man asked him for money. He told him he did not have any, and was walking away when the man shot him in the back.

Almost five months later I was on my way to visit with two men who had been shot the previous Saturday night that I was on call. I noticed another man who looked very familiar. He turned out to be the father of the young man shot on New Years Eve. He told me that his son was back from a rehabilitation facility, owing to chest pain, appetite loss and depression. After visiting with my two gunshot patients I went to see the man's son, deeply saddened. Here was a young man whose whole life had suddenly come to a screaming halt.

He was hooked up to a monitor, watching TV. His right leg was wrapped in a dressing. Three balloons wishing him well were floating near his bed, and on the facing wall were pinned get-well cards from family, friends and colleagues.

I said, "good morning; I was surprised to meet your Dad in the hallway. He told me you were back here and I just had to pay you a visit.

"Chaplain, I am so glad you did," he replied. "You and my mother were the first people that I remember speaking to when I woke up after being shot. I was hoping that you would stop by. Thank you so much for being with my family and my girl friend."

"What has been happening since I last saw you?" I asked.

"As you know, I was shot on December 31st. I stayed in the hospital for two-and-a-half months. I then went to the Rehabilitation Center for three weeks. At the beginning of the fourth week I started to develop a high fever and was brought back here for six weeks. I started to develop fluid around my lungs. After trying several procedures the doctors decided to do surgery. They drained the fluid from my left lung and also removed a coating that developed on my lung."

"How did you feel after the surgery?"

"I felt good for a couple of days. Then on the third day I felt very upset that I couldn't move; my birthday was this past Monday and I didn't want to spend it here. (With that he started to cry.)

"You must be feeling a great amount of despair."

"I just want to get on with my life. I just thank God that my parents and girlfriend are with me. I'm grateful for the nurses and doctors, but they won't tell me when I can get out of here. I just feel that I'm all balled up."

"Tell me about that."

"I feel tense and I can't sleep. At least I'm able to move around a little in bed. I don't know if it's anger or depression. As much as I love my girl friend and family, I feel that I have to begin doing things by myself. I don't know if I can handle another month in here. What if my lung fills up again? At Rehab I worked out for three hours a day; some days I would feel good and other days I was just stressed out. They work you hard so there's no time to be bored. What really has me worried is the drainage tube in my chest. I don't know if Rehab was a pipe dream now that I'm back here. It's really embarrassing if you have to depend on others. I had a lot of pride before this."

"I sense your frustration."

"What really bothers me is that I was minding my own business and enjoying the companionship of my dog when this happened. The individual who did it is still free and probably doing the same thing to someone else. Being young and active you don't think about God, because you're busy with your job and living life to the fullest. It takes a tragedy like this to open one's eyes to their relationship with God."

"Even in the deepest moments of despair," I told him, "we realize our absolute faith in God. This is what gives us the capacity to somehow deal with tragedy. It is the suffering person who has been given the right like no one else to stand before God, to challenge God and to grow through the process."

"Chaplain, would you please pray for me."

**I offered the following prayer.**

*O heavenly Father in Thy hand is the soul of every living thing.  
Give \_\_\_\_\_ the patience and not to let despair overwhelm him.  
Be with his dear ones in these difficult days.  
Give them the strength and courage  
To face the anxieties which they share with him.  
Grant him Your healing  
So that in vigor of body and mind  
He may return to his loved ones  
For a life which will be marked by good deeds, Amen.*

The Talmud is explicit in **recognizing the dignity of persons with dementia**. Rabbi Joseph expounded: "the Torah tells us that both the rewritten Second Tablets and the broken fragments of the First Tablets were deposited in the Ark. This was to teach us that a scholar who has forgotten his learning -- through no fault of his own -- must not be treated with disrespect (BT Menachot 99a)

When visiting an Alzheimer patient, proceed in a calm, orderly manner. Be aware that in earlier states of the disease the patient may experience mood swings, resulting possibly from frustration or impending source of loss. Try to understand the feelings behind the person's language, e.g. a request for "Mother" may be understood as a desire for love.

You might respond by discussing caring feeling in simple terms. Be careful not to argue with a confused person, corrections may result in angry outbursts. Do not take such outbursts personally. Instead, remain calm and request help from staff.

Speak slowly to Alzheimer patients, simplify your language. Talk about things in the patient's immediate environment: the meal that the staff has prepared, the picture on the wall, the sunshine, plants and flowers growing in the garden. Or talk about vivid episodes from the

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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patient's past: family, close friends, career or places where s/he once lived. Remind the resident about events that occurred long ago; old songs and music from the past are very effective. Try to bring a laugh or at least a flicker of happy memories to the resident's eyes.

Remember that so-called 'Hospice' care embraces death as part of life, attempting neither to hasten nor postpone death, but actively offering support and comfort during this period. Consider that a terminally ill individual, like all of us, wants to be regarded as *normal*. Until death is very near, visiting a terminally ill person is an affirmation of life's inherent holiness.

Be aware that even trained hospice workers frequently have anxiety when visiting a patient. If you feel queasy or inadequate, you are not alone. Finally, when it becomes difficult to bring hope, peace or meaningful connections to the world of the living, you can simply sit with the ill person, hold hands and say something like "I'm glad we are together."

**I wish to thank the following for their generous help in compiling data for this presentation:**

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and Congregation Ohev Shalom in Wallingford, PA.

And now I'd like to hand out a **List of Jewish Resources on Healing**.

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**Orenstein, Debra.** *Lifecycles: Jewish Women on Life Passages and Personal Milestones.* Woodstock: Jewish Lights, 1994.

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**Schur, Tzvi G.** *Illness and Crisis: Coping the Jewish Way.* NY: National Conference of Synagogue Youth, 1987.

**Twerski, Abraham J.** *Living Each Day.* NY: ArtScroll, 1992.

**Twerski, Abraham J.** *Growing Each Day.* NY: ArtScroll, 1992.

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## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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### Music and Movement

Judith Greenfield

Chair: *Hazzan* Joseph Gole

#### *Hazzan* Joseph Gole:

I want to start off by saying that the chairperson for today, Neil Schwartz needed to be at a rehearsal and he asked Sam Cohon to introduce this session. I then prevailed upon Sam to let me introduce the session because I have a very long relationship and close friendship with Judy Greenfield. I was the one who approached Judy and asked her to lead a session at this convention. Judy is a very talented cantor who has studied with me, studied with Nate, she's very devoted to her studies and her training as a cantor. Judy comes to her love of Judaism with a training and discipline in exercise and physical therapy. We have worked together cantorially. She is one of the most spiritual people I know. I admire her thirst for knowledge, both of *Hazzanut* and of Judaism. Judy has taken her passions for love of exercise, physical fitness and her love of Judaism and combined them into some wonderful concepts and ideas. I don't think I have to say much more. I'm so happy you're here. Judy is moving in so many directions simultaneously. She's put together a book with Tamar Frankel – which she will tell you about - balancing body, mind and spirit through traditional Jewish prayer, movement and meditation. *Minding the Temple of the Soul*, is the name of the book.

#### *Judith* Greenfield:

I'd like to tell you a little more about *Minding the Temple of the Soul*. The book is really a way of focusing spirituality into something that has already been going on for about 2000 years. What we've done is to focus only on five morning blessings. That's what begins our day. What we began with is obviously the *Modeh Ani*, before you get out of bed in the morning, just stopping for a moment and reconnecting our soul with our body. We do that in the book by stretching our bodies. This book focuses mostly on the doorway – we come in through the doorway of the body. For me, the body has been something that I have studied for many years – this is what I got a degree in.

I grew up with a Conservative background. Judaism was a very important part of my life. As a kid I went to Hebrew school every day after school. At the same time I have a love for different kinds of body movement. I would juggle my time between going to Hebrew school and dance classes, never thinking that somewhere along the line I would be able to combine the two worlds. In Conservative Judaism, to be very truthful with you, I didn't find the spirituality that I find today. I learned what I needed to learn. I was a good student and I learned how to read Hebrew. My parents said, "one day you'll thank us," and I thank them now. I didn't find it then and so my pathway led to becoming a professional dancer and trainer, working with people's bodies. This is what I got a degree in.

When I went into the more professional aspect of dance and movement, what I found – interestingly enough – was that not only was I interested in performing, but along with that came learning about different movements that led to spirituality, movement that led people into a prayerful experience, through Tai Chi or Yoga. I really loved this and one day as I was clearing things away, I realized that what I had been missing until that moment was this idea of consciousness or being at one with the Creator. It was really something inside me that

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went, "but you're a Jew, and if this is such an incredible religion (which you know in your heart it is), where is this in Judaism? Where is the body, where do you think about the body in Judaism?" In the traditional learning that I had done, it wasn't there.

About 10 years ago, I started hearing a little bit about Kabbalah and mysticism, which really wasn't O.K. At the time I thought you had to be 40 to study Kabbalah and mysticism, you had to be a man, and you certainly couldn't be pregnant. I was all three at the time – I was pregnant, I was a woman and I was not 40. But in Kabbalah I started hearing information that was similar to what I'd been seeking in the other direction. So I found a teacher, who is my co-author today, her name is Dr. Tamar Frankel. She was teaching a class on mysticism – actually it was 'Ezekiel's Dream' at the time. She is an Orthodox Jew at this point in her life, but then she was a teacher of comparative religion. She is a convert, she's been a Jew for 18 years. What happened for her is she fell in love with Judaism after studying all these different religions. She fell in love with Judaism and really made it her life. So not only did she teach mysticism, she also teaches Torah and she's a scholar in many of these areas.

There's a reason for having to be 40 to study Kabbalah. They wanted you to be grounded in tradition first. All these spiritual concepts are wonderful, but if you can't ground them in the basics, then what good are they? This is the whole seedling of what this work was about. People run to New Age and all these other places because they think they're getting something that makes them feel good – makes them feel calm – gives them a sense of tranquility. If you can't take these concepts and put them into something that's very grounded, you can't use it. I want you to understand from an experiential feeling what I'm talking about.

I'm going to ask you to stand up and move all the chairs away. You can take your shoes off if you want to. Begin to breathe and bring your feet shoulder width apart. We're going to do a stretch and then I'm going to take you into a meditation. This is how you start your morning. So, your feet are shoulder width apart and you begin to feel your feet grounded to the floor. Take a deep breath and take your hands over your head and stretch – breathe in and breathe out. And one more time – take a deep breathe, hold your hands above your head together – and breathe in and breathe out. One more time. Bring your left ear to your shoulder, take your left hand over your head and press gently on the head. Relax your jaw and take a deep breath – in – and out. So what you're doing is breathing your own *ruach* into your neck and the muscles of your neck. Breathe in – breathe out. Just hold it there for a minute. Relax the jaw. And bring your ear to the other shoulder and breathe in – breathe out. Let the neck stretch. Breathe in – breathe out. One more time, bring it in – and breathe out.

Bring the chin down into the base of your neck, your hands are where your *kipah* is (the crown of your head), bring your chin down into the base of your neck, elbows forward, and take a deep breath. Breathe in – breathe out. Bring the chin down along the chest, breathe in – breathe out; one more time – breathe in – breathe out. Drop your hands down and bring your head up. Run the chin along the chest as you make a half circle, and hold in a half circle – hold – keep breathing; bring your head center and hold. Look over your left shoulder and look over the right shoulder. Open your eyes. Breathe in through your nostrils – breathe in and breathe out. One more time – breathe in and breathe out. Bring your head center. Place your hands on your shoulders. You want to pay attention. Bring the shoulders forward and back. As you're working your shoulders, pay attention to the fact that you're working the upper body, you're breathing into those muscles and you're being very gentle

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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with those muscles because you're entering your body. Push your shoulders forward and back, circle and feel the upper back stretching as you breathe – take your time – bring your arms forward, hands come forward and drop the head. Now you're making a "T" shape with your body and you're stretching your back and dropping your head – breathe into the shoulder blade and breathe out because you're stretching your upper back. Again, breathe in and breathe out; one more time, stretching the shoulder blades and breathe in – and breathe out.

Now open your chest – hands are in back of you. Brush your hands down and look up, and open them up and feel the chest stretching and feel the heart opening. And hold – breathe in and breathe out – and then release the shoulders. Let the hands lean forward and go side to side. Touch the rib cage so you can know what you're working. Bring the left hand to the side, don't move the right side. Reach side to side, not only your mid-back, your middle section, keep breathing and move side to side. And reach...and reach...and reach...good. Now, you're going to wrap your waist with your right hand, so you make a belt for yourself. Left arm out to the side, big circle around, take a deep breathe and let the arm swing around. Draw a big circle all the way around and stretch. Begin with that and breathe in – and breathe out. Stretch from underneath your arm and around. Breathe...one more time – breathe in – breathe out.

Now let's do the other side. When you wrap your waist you're protecting your back. Around to the side, big circle around...and reach – all the way around – breathe in – breathe out...keep going in the same direction and around, big circle and reach side to side...reach higher and higher...and reach...and reach. Hands on your hips and bend your knees. The hips are like a bowl, lean forward and back and circle around as you breathe. It's the energy moving down through the body and beginning to ground in the feet. Circle the other way. You've been sitting a long time – you've got to get some circulation going, go around and breathe and come back into the center. Place your hands at your sides.

Now, I need you to move forward, and you're going to bend one knee at a time...easy lunge. Now let the hands go and let the body swing. You're going to feel around you and feel the palms of your hands, and as you breathe remember that we started with our breathe inside – that means you've entered the space around you, just be sensitive to it. You can close your eyes and feel your body – breathe – now slowly bring the feet together but keep it going...keep it going...keep it going...feet come together and they stop moving and arms just swing. Let the arms go down...feel the sensitivity in your hands...then gentle breathe...slow it down...slow it down...now just bring the hands down, deep breathe. Feel the energy in the hands and feet and just close your eyes, bring the feet together, and take a deep breathe in – hands together – and breathe out. O.K., we've aligned our physical form: *Asher Yatsar*.

And now we're going to do a *rechitsah* – a washing. A washing for the inner self. We're going to go into a meditation...we're going to wash from the inside. We've been gathering so much information, sometimes in order to gather more – Kabbalah means what? – a receiving. But we have to empty out first so we can receive. I'm going to ask you to close your eyes and take a deep breath. Breathe in and breathe out. Get comfortable where you're sitting and again, be aware of your physical form that's created in wisdom. And just be aware of how your body is sitting right now. As you close your eyes, become aware of your inner vision. That you do have vision from your inner self. Again, if at any time you want to stop – you're more than welcome to stop. As you breathe in and out I want you to imagine that it's morning. You find yourself sitting on a beautiful cliff side in front of the ocean. As you

breathe in and breathe out begin to feel what's around you. Imagine yourself leaning against the soft, mossy cliff side comfortably. You can feel the cliff side gently against your back and it conforms perfectly to your back, so you can relax. You look out at the beauty of the ocean in the morning and the sun is radiant. You can see it sparkling on the top of the water. You notice the sound of the waves rising and falling in natural steady rhythm that you begin to mimic. You begin to follow, and as you hear the sound of the waves and smell the smell of the waves breathe deeply in and out. You hear the sound and you smell the smells of the ocean rising and falling. As you breathe in and breathe out you allow that natural steady rhythm of the earth to enter into your body to help you relax. And as you rest in this comfortable place you also begin to feel the breeze gently relaxing your body as it flows back and forth, not only over your body but **through** your body. You continue to breathe in and breathe out. You notice now that the sun gently moves overhead. As it moves overhead, it opens ever so slightly and begins to pour a gentle cleansing rain down into your body to wash you. The sparkling rain gently enters into the top of the head and it washes your mind – it washes the mind of any worries, too many thoughts, memories – any thoughts that don't serve, you are right as rain to wash them out.

The rain gently washes your eyes, nose, mouth and ears – cleaning your senses. This wonderful rain begins to wash your throat, cleaning your words and voice. The rain gently washes your heart, washes the heart of any heaviness, anything in your heart that doesn't need to be there right now. Just let it be washed away like little particles of dust. And the rains gently wash your arms, hands and fingertips. They wash your solar plexus, the gut area where you sense things, where you intuitively feel, and it washes away anything that doesn't serve you. Feelings that don't serve you and emotions that don't serve you. And the rain gently washes your belly, cleaning your belly and washes the thighs, knees, calves and feet – washing away any tension there. Gently washes your arms, your hands and your fingertips. You notice this rain washing your spine, cleaning your spine and as you breathe in and breathe out, experience what it feels like to be a clean vessel. A vessel that resides between heaven and earth.

These rains continue to wash through you. Keep breathing... and very slowly you begin to notice a wave of light and the rain stops. The rays of light begin to pour into the mind, filling the mind and awakening the mind. The rays of light flow into your eyes, nose, mouth and ears, awakening your senses and heightening them. Rays of light flow into your throat, awakening the beauty of your voice, strengthening your communication with each other. The rays of light flow into your heart, opening the heart to receive them into it. And the rays of light pour into your arms and your hands and fingertips and they reach out into the world to touch others. Rays of light pour out from the heart into your soul and touch it, strengthening you emotions – especially your courage. And the rays of light pour into your belly, awakening your sense of power and creativity. And the rays of light begin to pour down into your thighs, knees, calves and feet – strengthening your walk. The rays of light continue to go down through your spine, supporting you – and as you breathe in and breathe out, the sun has now moved back to its original place and it has left inside you a gift of radiance that will awaken you today. And you wash this radiant light now weaving into your physical body and your mind and your soul so that you are aligned and whole. That wholeness brings you a sense of peace. Keep breathing in and breathing out... and when you're ready, very slowly bring yourself back to where you are now. Knowing you can return to that place whenever you need to. As you breathe in and breathe out, very slowly

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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begin to come back into your body and stretch your fingers and toes. When you're ready, very slowly...

I want to hand out what we're going to work with today. We begin with the *Mah Tovu*. In each chapter, you're not only going to find a line-by-line interpretation, but you'll also find – from a Kabbalistic perspective – what each line means. It will also be from a very personal perspective because these are personal prayers we say in the morning. "My G-d, the soul you have given me..." We then go into the *Asher Yatsar*, we go into the body. The body is not just an experience; we work out, we eat right, it is a very intricate system that G-d created to house our souls. We move into *Birkot Hatorah* – an opportunity to cleanse our minds. We can receive the Torah – our blueprint of how we're supposed to live – how we can live in a sacred way. Then we go to the last prayer, the *Elohai, Neshamah*. Let's look at the prayer for a moment and let's read it together. *Elohai, neshamah shenatata bi, tehorah hi. Atah berata, atah yetsarta, atah nefachta bi, ve'atah meshamrah vekirbi.* That's as much as we're going to focus on. I want to teach you the movements to just this much of the *Elohai, Neshamah*.

We begin the *Elohai, Neshamah* in the morning, with our hands lifted up. Here we wait, in almost a meditation, for our soul. This was created for us, so here we wait. And that soul is pure. That's the essence of who we really are. You imagine that this pure soul is placed in your hand – *elohai, neshamah shenatata bi* – bring it down into your heart. You've received it in your hand, and you release it. Just open the hand. Let's try that together – *elohai, neshamah shenatata bi* – comes into our heart. It's like You sculpted it, created something for us – *atah berata, atah yetsarta* – You breathed it into me. *Atah nefachta bi, ve'atah meshamrah vekirbi* – You preserved it in me. So the right hand wraps – the left hand wraps – You preserved it in me for my lifetime.

And here we're well up with gratitude – You gave me this incredible gift that I now know about. And with that feeling of being so filled up, what do we do about it? We say *Modeh Ani* – thank you for this wonderful opportunity to live a life. And we bow in our gratitude – *modeh ani l'fanecha* – we bow from side to side. So we're bowing in every direction that G-d is. And then we circle our whole body around and we circle to both sides. The end of the prayer – *hamachazr*. When we get to this part of the prayer we **become** the only metaphor that we can really use when thinking of what the soul is. It's such a hard concept. So I use the metaphor of the flame; you become the flame at the end. And from this spark, this spark where it begins to radiate once it's planted, it radiates to our whole being. And when our soul begins to radiate out, that's how life begins.

We have to get to the purity of that soul. At this point in the prayer we begin to feel it starting in our souls – the soles of our feet. And you separate the feet, and this is when I ask you to close your eyes so you don't judge your movement. It's not about what it looks like. It's about moving from the inside out, and allowing that energy to come up through the soles of your feet so that we can take on the form of the flame. It's done by gently rocking from side to side and allowing the whole body to feel the energy coming up through the legs, through the hips, into the belly. And you allow your body to stretch up and become that flame. Both hands reach up in whatever way you want so that you can stretch up. Let the whole body feel the soul, feel that radiant spark, and then the arms come down. Then you stop and there will be a meditation afterwards. So let's just try it and then we can discuss a little more.

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Close your eyes and breathe deeply. Visualize two Shabbat candles being lit. Imagine that inspiration touches the wick and the flame ignites. The light spreads all around you, lighting the whole room. The radiant flame reaches up toward its Creator and the world from which it came. The flame knows that it is here to light the world and that when it is done it will return to its Creator knowing it has fulfilled its purpose. Imagine yourself as the pure light, reaching for G-d and shining out with knowledge and action to fulfill your work on earth. As you go through your day, remember your light and see around you the lights of the others you encounter – all parts of the One.

I want to read you the story that begins the book about the soul. "Soul," said G-d, "I have a mission for you." "A mission?", the soul thought only angels had missions. "Yes, I'm ready", the soul said aloud. "You will go to earth for a certain period of time," G-d proclaimed. "Earth? From what the angels claim, it's dark and heavy there." "Yes, compared to where you are. One of your jobs will be to bring light there." "How do I do that?" "You will receive instruction," G-d said, "there will be time set aside for that." "What is time?" the soul asked. G-d sighed, "it's very hard to explain, but when you're in it, you'll know it." "Whatever you say," replied the soul. "You will also receive what help you need to complete your mission", G-d continued. "It will also be hard to understand at first, but you'll have plenty of time to get used to it." "You're talking about time again?" "The point is, I'm giving you something unique for your mission on earth, and it is called a body." "Thank you, but what is a body? I guess there's no point in asking, I'll find out." "That's right. Remember, the main thing is not to fear."

In a flash the soul found itself in a strange situation. It seemed to be in a kind of case, smooth and soft all around. The energy was dense, but the soul moved through it easily. At the same time there was an embracing form, almost like being in the presence of the Creator. Then an angel appeared in the presence of gentle light. The angel lit a candle and opened a notebook. The angel explained that the soul was now inhabiting a body and would soon enter into the human world as a tiny member of the human species. The soul listened and began to understand the wondrous purposes of existence, and the special role it would have in its earthly life. The angel also gave instructions for how the soul could stay connected with the spiritual world it temporarily left behind. The knowledge was delicious and the soul could even taste it. The soul felt radiant with joy. The angel sweetly kissed the soul on its upper lip, just below the nose. And before the soul could speak, the angel disappeared.

Warm darkness surrounded the soul and it slipped into a deep and restful sleep. When it awoke, the soul realized that its body was going through a great change. There was pressure and movement and the soul wondered what was happening. It tried to remember what the angel had said. There was something about beginning a mission, but... there were no instructions. Panic rose, and the soul wanted to escape. "Remember, the main thing is not to fear", a little voice said. The soul quieted itself, but the urge to get out was strong. The soul suddenly found itself being pushed with a mighty force into what seemed to be a tunnel. As it was sliding down a canal it caught a glimmer of light that reminded the soul ever so slightly of home. What a lift that small bit of light gave the soul. And then a breeze swept through a delicious breathe of light, followed by a vibration and a sound that came from its own body. A moment later the body was completely embraced, held and rocked with a gentle motion. The soul could focus now and saw faces and eyes almost as sweet as the angels. Voices, one low and one high, were nearby. Loving voices also reminded the soul of the

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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warmth and love of the soul world. The surrounding energy began to settle into a calm and more regular movement. Warmth now flowed into the body, a sweet-tasting liquid. Lips and fingers moved on soft warm skin and the fragrances of body were a kaleidoscope, changing each moment. The soul was thrilled at all these sensations, longing to express its surprise and happiness. The soul knew that a great miracle had occurred and sent a thankful song back to whoever got into the experience. The soul realized that the past and all the places it had been had become very hazy now. The soul hoped it would find a way to remember. Let's begin our journey.

This is taken from Midrash and is a perspective of what it really means to connect the soul and the body in a very different way, in a sacred way. By doing these morning blessings in this way, it's really an opportunity, not only for lay people – and this is who I've had a great deal of success with – but also because we are all doing something very important when we reach out to the congregation. We become vessels, we become really a bridge into this kind of knowledge. This way of praying – it's not changing *daven'n*, it's not meant to be a service. It's really meant as a way of preparing ourselves to go into the prayer ceremony. Just like *Birkot Hashachar* were meant to do, it gets you ready to go into prayer. It's not contradictional to enter in this quiet way so we can be more ready to reach the others.

### *Comment from the floor:*

This brings back a lot of thoughts that I've had over the years about meditation and prayer. I remember years ago, learning for the first time that the Hasidim grounded themselves maybe for one hour before they even began prayer. It sounds like you've conceptualized this old custom for our benefit.

### *Judith Greenfield:*

What I did is I taped this conceptualization, which lasts about 20 minutes. People put on their tape recorder and it's something they can do by themselves. We have both an audio tape and video tape. For some people it needs to be seen, it's really meant to be used as a working tape. What we have on Shabbat is wonderful, you have everyone together. But what do you do during the week? When you begin to pray in this way, Shabbat becomes so powerful, especially for people who are not used to praying. There's something very healing about doing this. What does it mean to align ourselves just from a body perspective? You've been to chiropractors – aligning oneself is one of the most exciting devices I've found. In the Kabbalah they liken the Eighteen Benedictions to the 18 vertebrae along your spine. You stand up so that you are alive. There are all these analogies and they didn't come only out of Kabbalah, they came from very traditional sources. Yes, this is a wonderful way of doing that and very needed. People suddenly want to know your secret – why is the *Hazzan* so motivated – what does he know that I don't? A lay person sits and wonders – what was that like when the *Hazzan* lay down and prostrated himself? It must have been a phenomenal feeling, his body was involved! And being a dancer, I have a tendency to want to dance too. It's a really thrilling experience to step into the prayer and to dance with the prayer that way.

### *Comment from the floor:*

What impact has this had on the service?

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*Judith Greenfield:*

I have an ongoing class that's probably the most exciting thing to watch. This is a lift-up. It's not a new religion, it's a lift-up. I started with about 25 women. It's gone on for three years. These are women who never went to temple except on the High Holidays. They didn't know prayer, didn't know Hebrew and once they learned the Morning Blessings they began to follow the year with meditation. On Rosh Hashanah there's a whole meditation on Forgiveness and how to ask for it in a meditative way. And just as we were able to focus on Forgiveness - we have meditations all through the calendar year. For Chanukah we meditate on light, what it is to bring light in. We do a beautiful one on Pesach - what it is to be in a 'tight' place (Mitsrayim). The meditations follow the year, and change with each season. But they begin with that Morning Prayer ceremony that's in their consciousness. Whenever they hear *Mah Tovu*, they can go back to that a time of unity where we prayed together. It's no different than what *daven' n* was, but people don't have prayers any more. So what has happened? These women are learning Hebrew, they want to know what the prayers are. And they want me to create meditations for all the prayers. And I'm happy to do it - it's my passion to do it. It's natural to me.

We're doing a piece now on Evening, how to go to bed at night. There are some people who can't stop. It's a beautiful ceremony. It's about going into our dream world. We are untying ourselves from our human form, it literally says that. In the morning we say thanks for bringing me back, for uniting my body and my soul and making another day. So, we're doing movements and meditations for the bedtime *Shema*.

*Comment from the floor:*

Just as there is now sign language as part of the service, it would be wonderful if this choreographed meditation were incorporated also.

*Judith Greenfield:*

It's really important to see it, and the exciting thing is when the congregants see it and they first begin to understand it. The whole idea is to let people feel very safe. It's O.K. if they don't do it. Just let people feel comfortable and do whatever they can or want to do. Even if they only imagine the movement, it's still a fabulous thing. How I would incorporate it into a service is do maybe one prayer and then go into a traditional service, to let people feel comfortable. It's very powerful because if from the beginning you start out in that 'place', imagine how far you can go!

Thanks, I've really enjoyed working with all of you.

### Programming for Adults

*Hazzanim Jeffrey Myers and Jeffrey Shiovitz*

*Hazzan Jeffrey Myers:*

The one thing to think about is – why adult programming? The answer lies in the fact that the afternoon religious schools – particularly in the Conservative movement – have produced adults with a pediatric knowledge of Judaism. That is because their education stopped at the age of 13. I dare say none of us would go to a doctor and expect the doctor to have a 13- year-old's understanding of medicine and still be able to take care of you. We can't expect that our adults – with a 13-year-old's understanding and knowledge of Judaism – are going to be at home in a synagogue.

That's where we, as part of the professional team, can make a difference. We can help make these people more at home in the synagogue – and certainly more at home as a Jew. So, the 'why' behind programming is that we can only go higher in the knowledge level – we can't go much lower. Our job is to increase that capacity of knowledge. To get Adult Education programming, you need to think about the **purpose** behind your programming. When I say purpose I'm only talking about your long-range goals. Adult programming can cover a wide range of possibilities that we'll delve into. But you can't just say, "I'm going to teach a course on such-and-such." You have to think, even before you're going to do that, "what's the purpose behind the course?" If you're going to teach people *ta'amei hamikra*, say for Haftarah – O.K. fine, now what is your goal behind that? What do you want them to be able to do? You should be able to say, "I want these people to be able to chant Haftarah." But you have to take that a step further – how are you going to implement it? So you have to have a real clear-cut picture of what is the purpose behind the Adult Education.

The next item – and this is not in any particular order – what **type** of program are you going to have? Is this going to be something that's give-and-take, is it going to be a lecture, is it going to be a demonstration, are people going to sit on the floor – what style is this program going to take? How will you involve the adult in your program? Is it a one-shot program, two semesters, a trimester format or an entire year? And then our favorite word – **location**, location, location... Where are you going to have it? The sanctuary? In your office? In your house? A weekend retreat? What's the **length** of the program, in terms of the amount of time in each session that's going to be spent trying to reach the final goal? Is this something that you're going to have as a cumulative process over the course of the year? And certainly, what is your **exit** goal? Now that you've done this program and it's concluded, do you want them to be hungry for more? Do you want them to say, "I now have a particular skill that I can share?" Do you want them to become your Chasidim, who will now preach your goodness to others? What are your exit goals?

So, before you just sit down and say, "O.K., I'm going to do adult programming," there's really a lot to think about. You have to first understand the infrastructure of your own institution. How does it work, how does it operate? Is there a person in charge of adult programming? And when I say adult programming, I don't mean Adult Education. Adult Education is just one facet of adult programming. There are other elements to adult programming that go beyond simply an Adult Education program or an Adult Education chairperson. What we're going to do here is share some models of things that cover each part of the spectrum and then after we've done some of that, we're going to open it up to you for dialogue discussion.

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I'd like to turn it over now to Jeff Shiovitz, who's going to share with you some of his ideas.

*Hazzan Jeff Shiovitz:*

What you just heard is from an educator's point of view. I look at it from a totally different perspective. I say, "O.K., I like this idea for a program, how am I going to make it work?" I don't think necessarily of long-term goals that way. I like to borrow from anywhere and everywhere. I keep a file of ideas at home and in the office. I'm not afraid to borrow from people. I look in the *New York Times* for different types of musical programs and I file the article, and then I say, "this would be a nice time to do it." What I'd like to do is go through a bunch of different programs that I've done in different areas. Some I do every year, some I do every other year, and some I do whenever I feel like it. Some have worked, some haven't, but what I want to do is offer some of the ones that have worked, and I've also got some ideas written out for you.

I think there are creative ways of teaching adult education. You can teach *Pirke Avot* or whatever you want in a regular class setting – whether it's Monday night, Tuesday night or Sunday morning. My most successful and popular program has been my Jewish Music Through The Ages program. There's a packet I'll give out in which I have 7-or-8 years' worth of ideas. When I first graduated from the Seminary I thought I'd like to teach different classes on Jewish Music. I tried it once or twice – nobody came. I started to think that maybe I have to get out of the synagogue. What I decided to do was move it to Saturday evenings – I do four Saturday evening programs a year – in people's homes. I did it in my prior congregation for 10 years; I've done it for several years in my current congregation. I limit it to 35 people and I usually get 30 to 35 people each time. I take a different aspect of Jewish music – it could be Klezmer, it could be Chasidic – this year I did Israeli music.

I try to look for things that will be interesting and fun for me. This year's Israeli Music featured 50 hits for 50 years. I started in '48 and went through the '90's. I dug up the background on a lot of songs, I played them, and I spoke about them. I also did one session on **classical** music by Israeli composers. I have a list for a couple years of people that would like to host the sessions. I bring my boom box, I bring the music, I bring the program – they bring the coffee and the dessert. We do a program for an hour and then people stay for 45 minutes to an hour just to schmooze. It's a nice Saturday evening program. My 12-year-old daughter loves to come to these. You can do anything. I've done 'Great Cantors from A to Z'; I've done 'The Many Sounds of Kol Nidre' where I've done Kol Nidres from around the world; 'The Wonderful and Wacky World of *Adon Olam*' – everybody knows these terrible *Adon Olams*. I brought some good *Adon Olams* also. I let people do all the terrible ones that they have always remembered from camp, and seemed to like. It's a fun thing. I have a list of them. So that's Jewish Music Through The Ages.

I also have one that I've done through Solomon Schechter in our area, which is basically the same, but I didn't want it to be the same program, so I changed the name to make it 'One People, Many Voices'. This is also a program you can do on a Sunday morning, if you're doing an Adult Ed class. One of my best programs that I do in the synagogue has nothing to do with being a cantor. I have a Senior Citizen program that I started about 5 years ago. It meets once a month on Tuesdays. We serve lunch and then we do a program. I have somebody coming in to do a program on financial matters. I've had people come in and talk about Kristallnacht. Ken Cohen has come in and entertained for *Yom*

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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*Ha'atzma'ut.* We have a book review – we have lots of different programs. Some musical, some not – I have to tell you it's one of the best things I do because the seniors love us. I get people who bake me cakes, one lady brings me a box of chocolates every month just to say thanks – it's one of these 'feel good' programs that you can't go wrong with. When we got a new Executive Director a couple years ago she asked, "why is the cantor doing this and not someone else?" The rabbi, who is very supportive said, "because he wanted to." The synagogue doubled my budget this year, to \$2000, so I can use that for other programs and bring speakers in. My wife is doing a program on Jewish Arts and Crafts next Fall, for the group of seniors. We bring people in from local community colleges to do different programs. We've had one on Jewish film and literature, and another on The Immigrant Experience. We are a congregation of 600 families, but we only have about 70 families that are considered seniors – age 55 and older. We get 50 people every month. We won a Solomon Schechter award for it this past year. It has nothing to do with music, although if you look past that it's one of our pastoral areas and it's a wonderful way to get to know these people.

### *Hazzan Jeffrey Myers:*

One of the things I think you need to consider is what are your personal strengths? What do you really feel you are confident at, that you're good at and you like doing? All of us have had to do things at a synagogue that we hate to do, whether it's run a program you don't like, officiate at something you don't like, sing a piece of music you don't like – whatever the case may be. There are plenty of opportunities available to find where your strengths are and the things you like to do, in terms of adult programming in a synagogue. Obviously you need to understand the infrastructure as I said before – how the synagogue works.

Who's in charge of these sorts of things? In Jeff's case, he gets along well with his rabbi and is supported by him. In my case, I have the same thing. My rabbi and I team-teach classes. For example, we have a Holiday program scheduled for three Tuesdays before the Holidays. We're going to have an hour class with *tefillot* for beginners. Each session will deal with a new part of *tefillot*. He's going to teach some aspects of it, I will teach a melody connected with it. So you need to look at these different components and say, "O.K., is my rabbi supportive of that? Is the adult programming chairperson supportive?" How can we get that together? You can't just dive into the pool without some sort of support to put these things together. You don't want to seem as though you're out on your own without support. Because if you're out on your own without support, it's not necessarily looked upon as a positive thing in synagogue life because people may think you're trying to get attention for things that only you can do and no one else can. So it's putting together these sorts of things with the support of the synagogue environment. And that's critical.

### *Hazzan Jeffrey Shiovitz:*

I do a Lunch and Learn once a month after services on Shabbat. I'll take a topic of Jewish music or *z'mirot* or just sit down and sing *z'mirot*. Bob Scherr did something similar this past year – on Friday night and Shabbat morning – he took a different Israeli song and at the end of services he taught it. At the end of the year they got together and sang all the songs, a whole repertoire of music that they learned during the year. I did another one that had nothing to do with music, which I called Bagels and Books. I'm big on names, I believe



that's how you sell a program. I look at my job as a salesman – I'm a salesman for Jewish music. I pick certain names to try and sell the program. Bagels and Books was a book club. I did it for a year. I didn't really like it. I didn't think that my strength was reviewing books. We did three of them – we had about a dozen or 15 ladies that came. Then I handed it over to the rabbi, who enjoys doing it, where I just never felt comfortable with it. But it's a nice program that we started. We offered breakfast and we reviewed a book.

In music programs, there are the obvious concerts. There's everything under the sun that you can do. I found that to make a concert successful, I have to be the chief salesman. I plug it from the pulpit to make sure all the publicity goes out – press releases – I sell all of my Patrons, Sponsors and Benefactors tickets. I know that if I don't sell them they're not going to get sold. People aren't just going to say, "Oh cantor, that is a wonderful concert. I want to come. Give me three tickets at \$150 each." It isn't going to happen. At least in my synagogue it doesn't happen. I call somebody up and I say, "We have the Andy Statmer Klezmer Group coming October 21. It's a wonderful program, you've supported my programs in the past, and will you be a Benefactor again. It's \$125 a ticket or it's \$36 to be a Patron. Will you support me by buying 2 tickets? There's the program and a reception after the concert." Almost everyone says yes to me. I spend a month on the telephone at night calling people. I see people during the summer, or at the community pool. I go up to them and I ask them to be Patrons or Sponsors or Benefactors. I have a guy in the congregation who is going to be the president of the congregation this year. Two years ago he thought I didn't like him because I hadn't gotten to the J's in my Rolodex yet. He thought I didn't like him because I hadn't hit him up for money. They expect a call once or twice a year and they're always prepared to do it. There are people that I know never to ask because they can't afford it, or the synagogue is not where they give their money or they may not like me, so I know not to ask them.

*Comment from the floor:*

When you do these concerts and you ask for money, is it just to underwrite the cost of the concert or is it to make money for the synagogue too?

*Hazzan Jeffrey Shiovitz:*

It depends. One of the programs I did at somebody's house. I like taking things out of the synagogue. I did a Salute to Jerusalem program in somebody's house. At the time we were building our new sanctuary and there was nothing in the budget for hearing-impaired devices, so I specifically charged money toward that. I was about \$300 short and I was mentioning it to somebody and they wrote me out a check so we were able to have eight hearing-impaired devices for the synagogue.

*Hazzan Jeffrey Myers:*

Let me share an example. We gave a concert to raise money for youth scholarships for encampment. Encampment is very expensive for many Regions. The New York Region, which I'm in, is \$400. That's a lot of money. Yet this type of program is wonderful. It's eight days for kids at Camp Ramah, and it should not be something that those who can't afford can't go to. USY should not be a program where only the wealthy can participate. So every year I give a concert, I bring in a friend or two, and we have a concert and it's to make money to put together a scholarship fund to keep that money available so we can give a kid

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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\$75 - \$100 to go to encampment. That may make the difference between a kid going and a kid not going. Parents wait to be hit up. They want to be hit up. We'll take in \$2,000 every year – at least – and this money is just for the kids.

### *Hazzan Jeffrey Shiovitz:*

I used to try to raise 2-5 thousand dollars, and I would have one concert a year. Then somebody suggested to me, "we don't really care in the budget, because \$2,000 or \$3,000 isn't going to make that much difference in the budget, so why don't you take that money and use it for another concert." The main thing is that I just don't lose money. I had Schlock Rock on Christmas Eve last year; it was the second night of Chanukah. The president of the congregation said to me, "you know, we really don't care even if you lose money on this," and I had already raised two-thirds of the money! They told me afterwards that the main thing is they thought it was a great idea for something for people to do. What else **can** you do? Either you are out of town, or if you're Jewish on Christmas Eve you go to the movies or to eat Chinese food. That's why we gave an alternative, and we had about 400 people that came. So we're doing it again this year. Same group, same night – it's not Chanukah. I was told that as long as I don't lose money, I'm able to do pretty much anything I want. They're willing to let me try anything.

I saw something in the *New York Times* about 10 years ago. At the Metropolitan Museum they had a program called Concerts and Croissants. I filed it away and a few years ago I had the Croissants on Sunday morning while there was Hebrew school, so that people could drop off their kids. We had breakfast and then I had a couple people do different programs. Then things started getting a little hectic at the *shul* on Sunday mornings. I had to do more Bar and Bat Mitzvah teaching, or the adult Bar and Bat Mitzvah class, and the Croissants sort of dropped by the wayside. But it was a very successful program and people thought it was cute. Sometimes you just have to try new things. Jack Mendelson, in one of the neighboring communities – on *Yom Ha'atzma'ut* – does a dinner. One year he had Charles Davidson commissioned to write a service for Hallel. And they do that Hallel for *Yom Ha'atzma'ut* every year. It has drums and a guitar and he and the rabbi of his synagogue, who has a beautiful voice, sing with the congregation and then they have a discussion-and-concert with a woman from the congregation who is an Israeli folksinger. I went with my family and we had a blast. It's just a fun thing. I'm going to try it this year at my *shul*, just as something different, and we'll see if people come.

We always have a pre-*Selichot* program. Before I came to the synagogue they always had some kind of a musical program. We've brought in different people; our budget is maybe \$500 for that. Our Ritual Committee has always said, "if it's a little more, that's O.K. too." This year we're bringing in the A Cappella student choir from Yale. They do almost an hour program. We have dessert, and then we go in and do *Selichot*. It's just another easy way to do a program. One of the neighboring synagogues invited choirs from all over Westchester County to have a Choral Festival. With adult and children's choirs there were about a dozen choirs there. Not only do you get their parents, but also you get people who love Jewish choral music. It was just a nice afternoon. I also did something that I stole from Hank Rosenblum. He used to have what's known as a Summer Sing when he was in South Orange. That was a way to get ready for the High Holidays. He would take a night and he would review with people the melodies for the High Holidays. I took it one step further. I made it during the winter – in January – when nothing is really happening. I went to

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someone's house with a big fireplace, and we took out these little songbooks called *B'kol Ehad*. We took out Israeli songs and other songs and sang. You shmooze and you eat and you talk and you sing – it was like a *kumsitz* – but it's in the middle of winter on a Sunday afternoon when you don't know what to do. We hired some of the teenagers to play games with the kids while we're in the other room having a blast singing.

Some people are intimidated by doing certain things in a synagogue. This way I take them out of the synagogue for a little while and we try and make it less intimidating. For those people who didn't know some of the songs, we taught them. We wanted everybody to feel comfortable and we had a good time. That's the main thing, so that people have a good feeling about the place. Even **within** the synagogue we do different services. I do a service once a year that allows me to introduce new music – I call it Mostly Musaf. Here in New York there's the Mostly Mozart festival – so we have Mostly Musaf. One year I did a Chasidic service, another year a Sephardic service or I'll do music by contemporary synagogue composers or introduce new melodies.

*Hazzan Jeffrey Myers:*

Let me add a couple of other types of services. I wanted to teach people the different types of *Nusach*, so at least they would know the difference. In many of our synagogues there's a mélange of all *Nusach* into one. One year I did a Litvisher service, so I found out who's 100% Litvak in the congregation and I had them all sponsor the *Oneg* with Litvisher food. I did a Galitzianer Friday evening service, the same thing as the Litvisher, and let them have a Galitzianer *Oneg*. I did a *Yeckesher* service, same thing. The services that they now hear are a combination of all different types of *Nusach* and where these different regional traditions fit into that.

A Youth Choir is certainly one way of involving the kids in the service. They learn the service, plus it gets their parents into the *shul*, which fills more seats – which always looks nice from the *Bimah*. If you don't have a Youth Choir, there's nothing preventing you having a conversation with the principal of your religious school and organize a choir to prepare two or three pieces for a Friday Night service. It's a very easy thing to do to get something like that going for a specific service.

Another idea is to involve an Adult Choir for certain services throughout the year and for non-service occasions as well. It's not just limited to Shabbat or Chagim of any sort. You can use your choir for almost anything. You can use your choir for a dedication of something, or an anniversary of something, so that services are not merely limited to Shabbat. If you think just Shabbat service, you're missing out on an entire large opportunity because there are more days during the year than Holidays and there are plenty of opportunities to fill them with these things on a non-service type of occasion.

*Hazzan Jeffrey Shiovitz:*

I just have two last things. I put together a quartet in the synagogue as my Adult Choir was disbanding. I thought, wouldn't it be fun if I could sing the bass part? So I got three other people and we put together this quartet and we started singing a little bit for different programs and it worked out great. For me, it was a lot of fun, instead of always having to be the cantor soloist; I got to sing as part of the choir.

The last thing that I'd like to mention is something that started at my last synagogue and then I brought it here. We call it the *Ba'al Torah* awards. Every year on the first day of

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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*Shavuot* we give out awards to our Torah readers in the synagogue. To encourage our kids to come back after their Bar or Bat Mitzvah, the first time they read Torah as an adult, I give them a *tikun*. We make a big deal out of it, we have it inscribed and then we invite them to keep coming back and reading. We took it a step further. Not only did we want the kids to read but also we wanted the adults to read. So we had certain adults that had been reading a lot and we picked a number – 360 verses – figuring that that was one or two full *parshiot*, and we gave them an award. We made that the *Ba'al Sidra* award. And with that came a crocheted *kipah* – a white one with Torahs around it. We doubled it for the next thing, which was the *Ba'al Torah* award, and they got a black one with Torahs around it. And if you read 1,500 verses, which is close to a full book, we called it the *Ba'al Sefer* award and we gave them their own *yad*. We have a lot of people at *shul* that shoot for this. I had a girl who just graduated this week from High School – and wanted to make sure she got to the second level before she graduated – and she did. She told me that she's going to come back because she wants to read more so she can get her own *yad*. It's not a question of not being able to go out and buy your own *yad*; this meant more.

*Comment from the floor:*

Are these awards you're talking about mainly for children?

*Hazzan Shiovitz:*

No, adults. It turns out to be mostly adults, and they love it.

*Hazzan Myers:*

Everybody loves to get recognition and an award for something. This is especially true of Haftarah-reading classes for women who did not become a Bat Mitzvah when they were young because they did not grow up in an egalitarian setting. Another area to consider, which is really wide ranging, is Family Education. There are many options available that don't preclude having the entire family there, and that's really a wide range of areas that we really don't have the time to be able to go into today. It's certainly something that should be on your mind. Something that you should be exploring and looking into, because it really covers such a vast range of possibilities in terms of programming for the entire year.

We've run out a whole bunch of ideas, and at this point you are probably trying to figure out what to do yourselves. What we thought might be a good thing to do is just to share amongst ourselves the types of things you do, or if you have questions about some of the things we've said, or what's worked for you or possibly what hasn't worked for you.

*Comment from the floor:*

At our synagogue we have a Youth Chorale and an Adult Choir. One of our congregants turned 100 this year so we did a program called *Ledor Vador*. The kids learned a song from each of the major Holidays and put a nice program together. It was a dairy luncheon and everyone was invited. The kids had some questions that they wanted to ask the adults – did you go to Hebrew school, where were you born – that kind of thing. It was a very wonderful adopt-a- grandparent kind of thing.



*Hazzan Shiovitz:*

It's good to take your Chorale out of the synagogue. I take my Chorale every year to Barnes and Noble on the Sunday before Chanukah. We have a concert there for the community. We get latkes donated by a kosher deli and it's open free to the public, plus our congregants get 10% off on their purchases and we get books donated to the school library from Barnes and Noble.

*Comment from the floor:*

I take my Youth Choir to Disney World every year when they have their Christmas festival; instead we do a Chanukah festival. It was very exciting for them and now the Disney people call us every year.

*Another comment from the floor:*

You talked about Lunch and Learn. This is something we had never done. We always have nice luncheons after a Bar Mitzvah and somebody said we should *bench* after lunch. The rabbi said "you want to *bench*, who's going to lead you to *bench*?" and I said I would. So I taught it and called it *Shabbat Shiur*. They loved it and now, every other week we have a *Shabbat Shiur*. We've covered every possible subject and now I have congregants teaching. We have a Mikvah at our *shul* – we have someone teaching how to use the Mikvah. We have someone else teaching how to kosher your kitchen. We have 75 – 100 people who come on Shabbat and stay.

*Hazzan Shiovitz:*

That's wonderful because you've empowered your congregants to do that. It saves you a lot of work, but more so, they have ownership in it and they have much more pride in seeing it be successful.

*Comment from the floor:*

We have a very talented amateur choir in our congregation. The dynamics of working with the choir were so good that I decided to hit while the anvil was hot and we continued our rehearsal after the High Holidays we targeted Friday Night services which could have a non-service song segment as well. That's been going on this whole year. The choir director and I had rehearsals in our homes. We arranged it so that when people came there was music playing. We had refreshments. We tried to solidify the choir and make it more ongoing, not just a High Holiday thing.

*Another comment from the floor:*

I was appalled by the quality of the Aliyot – people coming up for Aliyot and butchering the *brachot*. I made up something called the Bimah Box. I drew up a cartoon showing someone reading the Torah and someone next to them *schvitzing*. It said, "has this ever happened to you?" – with a big arrow below – and it said, "take one of these." And we made up a literature holder and put them in envelopes with a sticker on them and a direction sheet with transliteration. When you put it in the lobby and people come in and take one, there's no embarrassment because they're admitting they don't know.

For Bar and Bat Mitzvahs, when the parents get their package they're now also getting the Aliyot sheet. The synagogue will send it out to whomever they indicate, and that

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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means hopefully that people won't come up and make fools of themselves. If the synagogue sends it out instead of the parents, it's not like saying, "you don't know this". And that way they come prepared and the Bar Mitzvah goes off very nicely.

### *Hazzan Shiovitz:*

Let me share something recent that happened in my synagogue. A few years ago, I created a Bar Mitzvah checklist. Frequently when families are preparing for Bar/Bat Mitzvah they forget things, or things fall through the cracks because someone somewhere didn't think of telling them something. So this is a soup-to-nuts about what you're supposed to do in coordination with the synagogue – whether it's ordering Yarmulkes or when you are supposed to meet with the rabbi – and dated the checklist of when you should take care of each item, with an explanation in greater detail. Some new families in the congregation had not yet connected with other families, so I'm putting together a Resource Guide with the names of the places and the names of families who have used that person before. You can't assume that they know everything they need to know. We really need to empower people to take control of what they do.

### *Comment from the floor:*

There are so many things in the ritual and liturgical end of the Bar Mitzvah that I want people to know, that the last thing I'm concerned with is the importance of the party plan. I don't care where they get the loot.

### *Hazzan Shiovitz:*

I didn't mean to say that it was the **only** thing, but it does cover where to get Tallit and Tefillin, along with help with your Aliyot; it covers the entire range of things.

### *Comment from the floor:*

I noticed from going to Minyan quite often, there's always a select group of people that won't put Tefillin on, for whatever reason. I developed a Tefillin Restoration program, in which I went to one of the religious book stores and picked up old pairs of Tefillin. I said, obviously we have to work within the budget and I took all these pairs and repainted them and put new boxes on and worked with each individual to show them how to put Tefillin on. Those people now take pride in putting on Tefillin every day, and they encourage other people.

### *Hazzan Shiovitz:*

We have a family program which stipulates that in the year of your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah you have to attend a class with the rabbi. It's a Learning Minyan followed by a class. In the Minyan everyone has to put on Tallit and Tefillin, both kids and adults. We ordered enough so there are plenty for everyone to use at the Minyan, and we encourage people to buy their own.

It's a Learning Minyan where kids and parents are taught different parts of the service. They have to attend six of them in all. After each service they have a little break for coffee and juice and then they sit down and talk about different issues that Bar/Bat Mitzvah kids need to know about. The parents learn a lot about Judaism and the service. They're putting on their Tefillin and Tallit for those six Sundays, and for those kids that are having a non-



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Shabbat Bar Mitzvah, they're required to come five more times on a Sunday-or-Monday morning to the minyan at *shul*.

*Comment from the floor:*

I was looking through your packet and everything says, "space is limited". That's probably a reality, but do you do that in any case for psychological reasons.

*Hazzan Shiovitz:*

Oh yes. There was an article about that recently in the *New York Times*, that supermarkets advertisers say "Diet Coke – Limit 4" or "limit 12" – people are going to buy those 12, they're going to rush to do it. I use "limited" to a certain extent because I want people to sign up instead of just tell me at the very end, "oh, I'm going to come" or "I'm not going to come." If they sign up for it in advance, then I have an idea of how many chairs and the people that are hosting it know how much food to buy, or I know how many packets to make of things, so it's not a waste. A lot of it is psychological. You like people to think things are limited, so they'd better do it fast.

*Comment from the floor:*

As a dovetail to that, in our *shul* we have a lot of very old members and very young members with kids. I make sure everything says "babysitting available" so that the younger families realize this is a program that other people my age will be at.

*Another comment from the floor:*

When do the Torah readers read Torah, during the service?

*Hazzan Shiovitz:*

Yes, they read during the regular service. If a family has people that can read Torah, then I'll encourage them to read. Otherwise, the Torah readers are members of the congregation. It's not the celebrating family's service. They're told clearly that their Bar or Bat Mitzvah is a natural part of the life cycle that takes place during our service. In fact, when they have to sponsor the Kiddush lunch, they're told not only do they have to pay for their guests but that there's a certain number of regulars for whom they must provide in addition. They know it's not just a Bar Mitzvah service, and that their kids are participating in our regular Shabbat service.

*Comment from the floor:*

Along the same lines, we have a policy that I implemented that on the anniversary of the Bar or Bat Mitzvah each child is welcome back to read a portion. Every Bar/Bat Mitzvah family knows that when I'm scheduling, there's a potential that certain portions may go to predecessors and it makes a tremendous link not only for the families but for a new Bar/Bat Mitzvah student coming up. To have someone that's a year or two older or coming back from college who's reading on their Bar Mitzvah brings them a real strong sense of honor that their Bar Mitzvah is providing this sort of connection with the congregation.

*Another comment from the floor:*

What if you have a family that insists on all the Aliyot?

## **Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998** ---

### *Hazzan Shiovitz:*

In our synagogue the families are allotted a certain amount of the Aliyot and there's a certain amount for the congregation and that's what they have to work with. When it comes to having the Torah read, they have no say so in how it's read or who reads it.

### *Comment from the floor:*

I particularly like the idea of having 30 – 35 people in the home and having it run more like a Havurah. Can you share any insights as to how you solicit the cooperation and help of your rabbi or whoever you need to communicate to, to make it a successful program?

### *Hazzan Shiovitz:*

He just looks at it as one of the programs that I do. We don't compete with each other, nor does he feel that he has to be there either.

### *Hazzan Myers:*

Thank you all for sharing your ideas with us.



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## 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting Regional Reports

### Midwest Region

*Hazzan Alan M. Smolen:*

This past year has been the beginning of transition in our region. With a change in leadership and colleagues in area pulpits, we are planning to regain some of the prominence of our predecessors and additionally leave our own imprint upon the Midwest cantorate.

This year, our members produced three concerts. One in February at Beth Hillel Congregation (Wilmette, IL) featured *Hazzan* Sol Zim with host *Hazzan* Eric Wasser and his youth and adult choirs. Another concert in March at Congregation Beth Shalom (Northbrook, IL) presented *Hazzan* Henry Rosenblum and host *Hazzan* Steven Stoehr in a tribute to the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the State of Israel. In April at Anshe Emet (Chicago, IL) host *Hazzan* Alberto Mizrahi and *Hazzan* Shelly Kaszynski (*Hazzan Sheini*), along with two Reform colleagues and Mati Lazar conducting the Chicago Jewish Community Singers presented their salute on the occasion of Israel's Golden Anniversary.

Plans are underway to resurrect the *Ba'al T'filah* Institute, either this summer or shortly after *Simhat Torah*. Preliminary discussions have begun for concerts to be presented in various venues. There will also be more effort to reach the full scope of the region feasibly. We will continue to attempt to work with our colleagues locally in the Rabbinical Assembly in order to foster an environment of harmony for *hazzanim*, rabbis... and our laity as well.

The Chicago Association of Cantors, a group made up primarily of C.A. & A.C.C. members, continues to be a viable format for Conservative and Reform cantorial colleagues to meet monthly for professional development, community service and social interaction.

### New England Region

*Hazzan Charles D. Osborne:*

This fall, our region held a meeting at Temple Emanuel, Newton Centre, with some of our national officers regarding the selection of a new executive vice-president, as well as to discuss the plans for the C.A.'s 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary convention in New York City. Our thanks go to Bob Scherr for organizing the meeting, and to Chaim Najman for flying in from Detroit to be with us.

On December 14, a first-of-its-kind concert was held at Temple Israel in Sharon. This concert, co-sponsored by the New England Region of the Cantors Assembly and Masorti, the Conservative movement in Israel, raised funds for both organizations. As a result of this concert, the Cantors Assembly received over \$2600, plus a \$500 Israel bond. Temple Israel's *Hazzan*, Steve Dress, is currently working on a proposal exploring the possibility of a series of joint concerts with Masorti.

In January, legislation was filed at the State House in Boston to give out-of-state cantors the same right to perform marriages in the state as rabbis and clergy of other faiths.

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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Spearheaded by V.P. Bob Scherr, the legislation, sponsored by State Senator Cheryl Jaques and State Representative Harriette Chandler, would put cantors who are members of the C.A. and other bona fide professional organizations on the same justly deserved equal stature as clergy of other faiths in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

A May 17<sup>th</sup> concert in Portland, Maine honoring our beloved colleague Kurt Messerschmidt raised \$5000 for the Cantors Assembly. *Kol Hakovod* to Kurt, as well as to participants Shira Belfer, Simon Kandler, Charles Osborne, Sam Pessaroff and Scott Sokol.

Also on May 17<sup>th</sup> was a unique concert at Congregation Mishkan Tefila, Chestnut Hill featuring colleagues Arieh Finklestein, Gregor Shelkan and Marilyn Becker, honoring both their current organist Jonathan Barnhart on his 18<sup>th</sup> year with the congregation, and the memory of one of their former organists (here's the unique part), Leonard Bernstein, on what would have been his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.

*Kol Hakovod* to our beloved Simon Kandler of Temple Emeth, Chestnut Hill on the reception of an honorary doctorate from Jewish Theological Seminary; to Sam Pessaroff of Temple Ner Tamid, to Peabody Becker on her being accepted as a member of the C.A.; and Mazel Toy to Brian Mayer and Suzanne Hertzberg on the birth of Raphael Max (7 lbs., 1 oz.) on May 5<sup>th</sup>, as well as for Brian's completion of his doctorate in Sacred Music.

### New Jersey Region

*Hazzan Janet Roth Krupnick:*

I am pleased to report once again that the New Jersey Region of the Assembly has had a productive and successful year. We have performed three major concerts, both at synagogues and at a community celebration of Israel's Fiftieth Anniversary at the Metro West Jewish Federation, as well as one smaller scale performance. In mid-June we will give our final performance of the year, a concert in memory of our long- time member, *Hazzan* Hillel Sadowitz z"l. Finally, our year will end with a Day of Study led by members of our Cantors Concert Ensemble, and our closing brunch.

We meet twice a month for about two and a half hours of eating, schmoozing, rehearsing... and then... more eating and schmoozing! Our Ensemble has twenty-six active members from all over New Jersey. Approximately sixty-five percent of our members are affiliated with the C.A., twenty percent are affiliated with the A.C.C., and fifteen percent are unaffiliated. We are a rather democratic organization, and conducting and other responsibilities are shared, as are vocal solos and a plethora of opinions. We are dedicated to learning new music and reviving forgotten classics. Our repertoire is ever growing and the Ensemble has a truly beautiful sound.

New Jersey is not as small as it looks on the map. Some of our members travel over an hour each way to come to rehearsals. We are grateful for this dedication and loyalty.

This year we welcomed two new members: Cantor Sam Weiss of the Jewish Community Center of Paramus and Cantor Charles Romalis of Temple Beth Tikvah. We are saddened to say good-bye to two of our colleagues: Cantor Larry Goller and cantor Anita Schubert, both of whom are leaving New Jersey for the Midwest. They will be missed.



The New Jersey Region of the Cantors Assembly was pleased to sponsor an advertisement in this year's Fiftieth Anniversary Journal and we look forward to making an additional contribution at this year's Convention.

As I am concluding my two-year term as chairperson of the Region, I am pleased to announce our new slate of officers:

Chairperson.....	Cantor Arthur Katlin
Honorary Past Chairperson.....	Cantor Daniel Green
Executive Vice President.....	Cantor Mark Biddelman
Vice Chairperson and Secretary.....	Cantor Ilan Mamber
Treasurer.....	Cantor Matthew Axelrod
ACC Representative and Librarian.....	Cantor Carla Boscoe-Reynolds
Unaffiliated Representative.....	Cantor Ruth Katz Green
Members at Large.....	Cantor Lee Coopersmith
	Cantor Murray Simon

### **Philadelphia Region**

*Hazzan Eliot L. Vogel:*

The Philadelphia (Delaware Valley) Region of the Cantors Assembly had an active and productive year. Whereas in past years our activities tended to be more educationally oriented, this year our focus was put mainly upon the preparation for two major concerts. The first, presented in December, celebrated the Cantors Assembly's Fiftieth Anniversary. Our second concert, held in late March, was presented in conjunction with our esteemed colleague Howard Dardashti and the musical forces of his synagogue in Cherry Hill, New Jersey.

Our December program, most ably chaired by *Hazzan* Sheldon Levin and hosted by *Hazzan* Bernard Lowe as a part of his congregation's fiftieth-anniversary festivities, was a resounding success. It was intended as an opportunity to showcase the diversity of styles and approaches to Hazzanut practiced by the modern cantor, and presented a wonderfully rich and varied program under the musical direction of *Hazzan* David F. Tilman. The evening included a world premiere of a Musaf Kedusha for *Hazzan* and children's choir written by Cantor Marshall Portnoy. The piece was jointly commissioned by Adath Israel Synagogue and the Delaware Valley Region of the Cantors Assembly specifically for this occasion. *Hazzan* Isaac Wall, a past president of the Cantors Assembly and a past chairman of our region, presented greetings and a most fitting reminiscence of the founding of the CA. The community responded with great enthusiasm to the program and several thousand dollars were raised.

This past year members of our region were heavily involved in programs both in the community and within in their own congregations in celebration of Israel's fiftieth anniversary. Of particular note were orchestral concerts either organized or conducted by *Hazzanim* Levin, Portnoy, and Tilman. *Hazzan* Tilman also acted as chorus master for a major community-sponsored concert featuring the Israel Philharmonic and Philadelphia

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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Orchestras. A second concert, held at Philadelphia's Academy of Music, utilized the combined forces of synagogue choirs of our region. Many of these are conducted by our members. The concert included a work orchestrated by *Hazzan* Sheldon Levin and performed by the Concerto Soloists Chamber Orchestra.

*Hazzanim* Charles Davidson and Eliot Vogel collaborated in the presentation of a program which brought an exceptional response for the community by reason of its creativity and originality. A new musical celebrating Philadelphia's ties to Israel entitled "Hello Ben Gurion, Shalom Ben" written by Davidson and performed by Vogel brought rave reviews along with cameo appearances by both Mayor Edward Rendell and Israel's Consul General.

This past year we were delighted to welcome *Hazzanim* Faith Steinsnyder Gurney, Daniel Leeman, David Perper and Arlene Ungar into our region. Their talents and enthusiasm added immeasurably to our successes. Through regular meetings during the year our region has continued to strive to meet our members' needs for educational enrichment, comradeship and musical expression in a peer setting.

### **Seaboard Region**

*Hazzan* Kimberly L. Komrad:

Sadly, we said farewell to two of our Region's members this year, Farid Dardashti and Faith Gurney, who are now serving congregations in New York and Pennsylvania, respectively. We have happily welcomed two new colleagues: Thom King, and Emanuel Perlman to our Region. Also, we welcome Sharon Wallach who has been serving a pulpit in Baltimore and is a new member of the CA this year.

To celebrate Israel's 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Kim Komrad gave a concert together with Thom King and Emanuel Perlman at Beth Israel in Baltimore, featuring a program of Israeli songs.

We are now actively planning a pre-Chanukah concert, to be held on December 6, 1998 at Beth El Congregation in Baltimore as a fund-raiser for the CA, with as many cantors from our region participating as possible. We are very grateful to Thom King at Beth El for agreeing to host this concert.

Our bimonthly meetings are an opportunity for learning and we have had speakers give some very interesting programs. This year we have heard from Rabbi Sheila Russian, attorney, on "Mediation: Strengthening Jewish Families in Transition" and Dr. Mark Komrad, psychiatrist, on "Depression: From the Bible to the Brain."

Currently, we are preparing an important professional survey of our members. We want to know more about the regional standards for the job responsibilities expected of Cantors concerning teaching B'nai Mitzvah students. We will see if there are differences in congregations' expectations of Cantors based on congregational size and numbers of students each year. We hope to eventually extend this survey to the national level and publish the results. Some of us in the region have felt the need for such data in negotiating contracts with our congregations regarding fair teaching expectations.



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### Southeast Region

*Hazzan David Feuer:*

This year, the Southeast Region can be characterized as “building camaraderie.” With the leadership of the officers, David Feuer (chairperson), Mark Kula (treasurer), Bill Lieberman (secretary), and Elaine Shapiro (immediate past chairperson), the Region a very memorable, productive year.

Our meetings began in October at the home of Elaine Shapiro, in Boca Raton, where we outlined goals for the upcoming year and we served a beautiful Succah luncheon. In November, we met at B’nai Aviv, in Weston, where Bill Lieberman presented a proposal to form a working regional cantors concert ensemble. On December 7<sup>th</sup>, we combined our efforts with the Seminary’s Florida office to produce a triumphant program honoring Rabbi Morton Liefman and the Seminary’s cantorial graduates who currently reside in the region. Six H.L. Miller Cantorial School students were invited to Florida to participate in two concerts, held at Beth Torah Adat Yeshurun in North Miami Beach and at Bet Shira in Miami. Mitch Martin and Mark Kula were the respective hosts and organizers of the concerts and Chancellor Ismar Schorsch gave the keynote address. Later that month we met at Beth Am Israel, in Cooper City, hosted by our colleague, Eric Lindenbaum.

We met again in January at Beth Am, Margate, as Irv Grossman invited us to inaugurate the first meeting of the newly formed cantors ensemble. Choral music was introduced and conducted by David Feuer and Bill Lieberman, and a piano accompanist was engaged for the rehearsal. A great beginning! A second rehearsal was held in March as Mort Kula and Allan Robuck added to the growing repertoire.

In March, we convened at Temple Emanu-El in Palm Beach. David Feuer invited Cantors Assembly Vice President, Sheldon Levin to address our membership. Sheldon not only gave an informative, and inspiring talk about the Cantors Assembly, but also taught us new techniques for teaching trope to synagogue school children. We concluded the year on June 3<sup>rd</sup> with a festive barbecue dinner at Beth Torah Adat Yeshurun, hosted by Mitch Martin. All of us look forward to continuing the “building” process in this great region during the coming year.

### Tri-State Region

*Hazzan Jack Chomsky:*

The members of the Tri-State Region convened in December in Southfield, Michigan.

At that meeting, officers were elected for 1997-98: Jack Chomsky is serving as Chair and Ofer Barnoy as Associate Chair.

A series of concerts celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cantors Assembly and of the State of Israel was held in May. Between Monday, May 11 and Thursday, May 14, concerts were held in Columbus, Akron, Cleveland and in Rochester, New York. The concerts, featuring local *hazzanim* as well as David Propis, Faith Steinsnyder Gurney, Rafi Frieder, and Henry Rosenblum. In the Cleveland concert, Ida Meisels, Louis Danto and Isaac Goodfriend were honored and Alberto Mizrahi performed.

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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The combined concerts are expected to raise over \$15,000 for the Assembly, and produced a public relations bonanza, thanks in part to the magnificent poster and publicity materials designed by Susannah Levin of Columbus.

*Hazzanim* Stein, Leubitz, Barnoy and Chomsky met repeatedly in person and by conference call to work out the myriad details of the concert series.

### Westchester/Rockland Region

*Hazzan Jeffrey Shiovitz:*

The Westchester/Rockland Region of the Cantors Assembly met several times this past year with the Connecticut Region. Our meetings were ones of sharing, good will, mutual concerns and learning. Jack Mendelson, our C.A. Secretary and region member visited with us to discuss long-range goals and planning of the C.A.. This led to a free discussion and interesting forum on the Cantorate. We had workshops on the programming and the use of the computer in our work. Both were incredibly stimulating. Our good friend and colleague from New Rochelle, Hazzan Lawrence Avery, gave a Master Class for the members of our region. This was one of the best sessions I have ever attended. Hazzan Avery, a master teacher, truly taught us and inspired us and rejuvenated everyone who attended.

### Western Region

*Hazzan Laurie Rimland-Bonn:*

Once again it is with great pleasure that I write to you in regard to the activities of the Cantors Assembly Western Region. This past year has been a rather exciting one for us.

For the past few years we really haven't had a place to meet on a regular basis. There was much discussion as to where our meetings should take place. A few of us met with Rabbi Jack Schechter of the University of Judaism to see if it would be possible to have our monthly meetings there again. He was very enthusiastic with the idea of having a cantorial presence on site. We are happy to be there.

This year our mid-Winter conference was held in Cathedral City, California (in the Palm Springs area) at the Doubletree Resort and Hotel. We had two fundraising concerts, wonderful learning sessions, and delicious food. I'm proud to say that we'll be returning to the Doubletree Resort and Hotel again this year for our mid-Winter Conference, the dates are January 8 – 14, 1999.

This year our Region chose a project to focus on. Many discussions took place about putting a "Rosh T'filah" at Camp Ramah in Ojai, California. We have also been looking into having a Cantorial presence at the Los Angeles Hebrew High School, so that there would be continuity in training these young people in *Nusach*. Another interesting twist: we will be implementing our Baal T'filah program into the Rabbinical School as part of their curriculum as well. We are very excited about the way things are shaping up. There will be a concert in June that will help subsidize the Camp Ramah program.



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## Installation of Officers

### *Hazzan Morton Shames*

*"Roni v'simchi bat tzion, ki hin'ni-va v'shachanti v'tocheich, ne'um hashem* 'Sing and rejoice, daughters of Zion, for I will come and dwell in thy midst, saith the Lord'.

We all recognize these familiar words that flow ever so easily from our tongues. Is it a coincidence or truly something *bashert* that we should be reading these words this coming Shabbat while we are in the throes of a glorious moment in our history; when God is surely in our midst. Who would ever have imagined the magnitude and magnificence of this time? The road we have traveled as Hazzanim since our establishment as a Cantors Assembly in 1947 has been a lesson in adventure, in patience, in fortitude, in energy, and in a passion to succeed. As we take these moments to install our leadership let us continue to be mindful and to always remember those loved ones whom we installed in the past, and who were ultimately the ones responsible for this momentous gathering. Were our founding fathers here today they no doubt would be both astonished and proud and would probably recite the *Shehecheyanu*. What a wondrous time to be privileged as the installing officer I thank you for this singular honor.

First, a tribute to our outgoing members of the executive council. Would the following please rise : Faith Gurney, Martin Leubitz, Brian Mayer Charles Osborne, Steven Stoehr, Stephen Texon. You were called upon to serve and you have successfully completed your task. Not only have you brightened our ranks by your presence but you have also expanded our boundaries by your vision and counsel. The *chavruta* you have brought into the Assembly is both heartwarming and vital; for an organization of people involved in spiritual and artistic endeavors needs the love and kindness for it to achieve success in its mission.

As I discharge you, I quote from our rabbis: *g'milut chasadim yoter min hatsdaka*. Doing deeds of lovingkindness is greater than offering charity, for deeds of lovingkindness are accomplished through involvement as well as through *tsedaka*. Mazel tov!

I would like to welcome now our newly elected members of the Executive Council, those who will take the places of our members who have just been discharged. Would the following please rise: *Hazzanim* Jack Chomsky, Perry Fine, Joseph Gole, Mark Kula, Jeremy Lipton, Jeffrey Myers, Howard Nevison. This is an outstanding group of people! How the complexion of our Assembly has changed since I first entered its ranks in 1955! What an amazing variety of skills we now bring to the profession! Unlike other organizations bewailing their lack of strong leadership we can pride ourselves on both the quality and enthusiasm these *Hazzanim* bring to their office. Many have already served and have contributed greatly to our success. We ask you, the newly elected to join this already established group of distinguished people to bolster the hands of the total administration, always to be supportive of those seeking to further the ideals of our calling, and to help formulate a consensus for our future. *K'doshim tih'yu* – you shall be holy we say to each of you, for in seeking holiness not only will you encompass what we, the assembly represent as *Shlichei Tsibbur*, but you will also pursue justice and truth. *B'hatslachah!*

Aside from our new treasurer, Steven Stoehr, whom we welcome with great affection, our officers remain as they are; nevertheless, I have a mandate to install our officers with whom we have been blessed in order that they may continue to serve.

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

---

Would the following officers all rise: Jacob ben Zion Mendelson, Joseph Gole, Steven Stoehr, Robert Scherr, Sheldon Levin, Chaim Najman, and Henry Rosenblum. To install these *chaverim* is to give us a sense of a presence in eternity, truly a moment of majesty and rejoicing, and a sanctification of His name, a *Kiddush Hashem*. Jacob ben Zion Mendelson, our secretary; not only can we delight in his song and his spirit, but we can feel a confidence that as our Secretary, he rightfully records and codifies in our minutes a monumental era in the history of the assembly. May God strengthen the work of your hands.

As we proclaim a huge *yasher koach* to Joe Gole and our deep gratitude for an outstanding job not only as treasurer, certainly as chairman of this unforgettable convention and on so many other levels, we wish you well and we continue to seek your input on our executive council. You are discharged as secretary.

We welcome Steven Stoehr, who even before he takes office has already demonstrated his skills and talent in serving our assembly and the entire cantorate. It is through your efforts that the Miller Cantorial School has been established. *Baruch haba!*

What can we say of our beloved colleagues, Vice Presidents Sheldon Levin and Robert Scherr. Not only do they fill our souls with pride because of their *menschlichkeit*, but they also impart wisdom and *bina*, understanding to our ranks. Their enthusiasm for education and knowledge coupled with a genuine sincerity make us the fortunate recipients of their gifts. *Lalechet h'chol d'rachav* – to walk in all His ways – so do Sheldon and Robert walk with compassion, patience, abounding in kindness, and faithfulness. *Mazal Tov*.

Chaim Najman, our Senior Vice President, who with his beautiful voice brings *Hiddur Mitzva*, beauty and holiness to our calling. Chaim, who is kind and very human, also has an intuitive, inventive, and creative mind, encouraging new works and scholarship, which enhances our profession, lifting us to new and lofty heights. May it be, Chaim, that you continue to bring us *bracha v'shira*.

*Achron, Achron Chaviv.* To speak to our beloved and precious President, Henry Rosenblum, is to be redundant. For he has far surpassed all which we might have expected of him. He brings honor to each of us. Above all he is a *chaver tov* with a *lev tov* – a good friend with a good heart. He is a listener par excellence. To speak to Henry on the phone or for that matter at any given time, one can be sure of Henry's undivided attention. We all know the path upon which life has taken him since his installation. Exciting, yes, but also stressful; each new assignment demanding enormous amounts of time and preparation. Nevertheless, we rarely find him short of temper or time. We thank you for that. Every so often we meet a person in our travels who is an *ohev et habri'ot* – a lover of people – and a *rodeph shalom* – a seeker of peace. His love of us strengthens our resolve as *Hazzanim* and helps us an organization. Besides that, he brings us his dynamic wife, Susan, who, in her own right, raises mountains.

In speaking of Henry Rosenblum, I am reminded of the most famous quote of the Philosopher Emanuel Kant. He said, "two things fill me with awe, the starry skies above me and the moral law within me. In order for the universe to function the moral law and the heavens must be in accord." Henry Rosenblum, together with all those whom we have installed, have melded together both the cosmos of spirituality and morality of their souls. They have shown us a path strengthened by the support of the Assembly; they strive to bring blessings into our lives and glory to our world. Together we can, I believe, meet all our future challenges with success, and go on to conquer new horizons.



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## Response of the Newly Elected Executive Vice President

**Hazzan Stephen J. Stein**

Dear Colleagues, I am truly honored to have been selected by the membership of the Cantors Assembly to become the third Executive Vice President of our esteemed organization. As you will recall from the minutes of the most recent Executive Council meeting, it was the opinion of the Search Committee that all three candidates who applied for this position were worthy of consideration. Each one brought forth impressive credentials as well as a diversity of skills. I am particularly fortunate, not only in having been selected, but also in being able to begin my term with Sol Mendelson and Morton Shames at my side. Both will be filling important roles in the daily administration of the Assembly.

As you read through the Jubilee Journal, which will be ready for distribution to our membership soon, you will find an article which I put together on the history of the past 25 years of the Cantors Assembly. As you review that article, you will find that the name of Solomon Mendelson appears time and again as the creator and chair of several innovative and important programs. Sol will continue to serve the Assembly in this capacity, devoting significant time to the ongoing development of such projects, with a title and the *kavod* to which he and such a position are due.

It has been my privilege and pleasure to work with Mortie Shames in Placement for the past several years; and it is extremely rare that he and I do not agree on the best approach to handling difficult a situation. Through his interpersonal skills, sensitivity and keen intellect, he has represented our Assembly well as placement chair, both in conversation with colleagues as well as with congregational representatives. I hope you can and will appreciate the difficulties of this position. At times, honesty requires the placement chair to convey unpleasant information to colleagues. When we hear from congregations, continuously, that a *Hazzan* is not making a favorable impression during interviews, we must share that knowledge if he/she is to remedy the problem. In addition, not every colleague is well suited for each position. Mortie Shames is as sensitive an individual as there is to be found within our ranks. He does his best to handle these situations with kindness and diplomacy. Robert Scherr is another who possesses those qualities, and that is why I have asked him to assume my former role as co-chair of placement.

As I move into the position of Executive Vice President, I compare my new role to that of a theatrical director who works behind the scenes, making the actors look their best. While it is true that the Executive Vice President is the primary spokesperson and public advocate for the organization, my objective is to also operate unobtrusively in the background, helping each *Hazzan* to become a star in his/her own congregation. I view my responsibilities on two levels, dealing with the day-to-day operations of the Assembly and developing a long-term vision for the future of the Cantorate. Knowing that our time is limited, I would like to concentrate on the first area. I plan to address the latter issue on Monday evening, October 19, at an event which will mark the positions to which Henry and I have just been appointed: Dean of the Cantorial School and Executive Vice President of the Assembly, respectively. Saul Hammerman, who thought of the idea for that special evening, will serve as chairman for the event; and my dear friend Robert Kieval will be the co-chair. More information about this event, which will include a concert and presentations to important figures in the Jewish and musical communities will be made available shortly. The

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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program will take place at the Jewish Theological Seminary and will precede a scheduled Executive Council meeting.

I would like to briefly address seven “nuts and bolts” issues which I believe to be of concern to this membership. First, and foremost, our organization’s primary responsibility is to provide support and guidance. An individual joins a professional organization as a place to turn when encountering job related difficulties. Few of us go through our careers without, at some point, needing such assistance. I believe that when members are asked about their experiences with the Assembly, what they will remember, above all, is how we responded in their hour of need. Many of you have come to know me well. I try my best to treat others with consideration.

Placement will always be among our most important agenda items. We are continuing to make improvements in this area. This year, with the cooperation of the United Synagogue, only one Conservative congregation seeking a full-time *Hazzan* failed to sign a letter of intent to deal exclusively with our placement service. This is a significant step forward from previous years. As was pointed out just a few moments ago, we try to staff our Placement Commission with colleagues who are sensitive to the needs, concerns and apprehension of members who have decided or are contemplating a change of positions.

I understand that we are going to have to do a better job of explaining the Assembly’s finances to our membership, if we expect members to continue to raise funds for the organization. Beginning with next year’s convention, I am going to ask our Treasurer, guided by our Executive Administrator, to prepare a comprehensive report on the Assembly’s finances for the Annual Meeting. For now, however, I ask that you keep two points in mind. 1) The Cantors Assembly cannot possibly sustain the day-to-day activities of the organization solely on the income derived from the current dues structure. Members of both the Rabbinical Assembly and the American Conference of Cantors pay dues that are equivalent to 1% of income. If our membership wants all of the monies earned from fundraising to be used exclusively for philanthropic purposes, then it must be prepared to set dues at a similar scale. 2) No one who receives a stipend from the Cantors Assembly is getting rich. For each of us it is a labor of love. No one would work this hard or devote so many hours solely for the modest payment that is offered. If you were to add together the salaries of everyone who receives compensation from the Cantors Assembly, including the secretarial staff, the total would not measure up to the salary that is paid, alone, to the Executive Vice President of the Rabbinical Assembly or the United Synagogue.

Abe Shapiro and I have met with the representatives of BWD Group Limited. I know that some of you have had the opportunity to meet with them during this convention. BWD is the company that has taken over the insurance programs from Leo Landes for the arms of the Conservative movement. I am pleased to report that the company is trying to create one comprehensive group health coverage plan for *Hazzanim*, Rabbis and Jewish educators. We hope to have more definitive and positive information for you in the months ahead. For now, the company is available to guide you, if you need to purchase individual or family coverage. Our representative is Brett Blumencranz. Abe Shapiro or I can put you in touch with him. BWD also carries the Cantors Assembly Long Term Disability Plan. I cannot encourage you strongly enough to enroll in that program. You have a moral obligation to your family to carry this type of insurance coverage in the event, God forbid, that you are disabled and unable to work.



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For years we have commented on how wonderful it would be to have a *Hazzan* as Dean of the Cantorial School. Our dream has come true. As you know, next month, our president, Henry Rosenblum will assume this prestigious position. If he is to succeed, he will need our help. His success, in large measure, will be dependent upon recruitment. We must work hand in hand with Henry to find the finest young men and women for the Cantorial School.

In truth, the next generation of *Hazzanim* can be found in our congregations. Bruce Braun, Adriane Caplowe and Jamie Gloth, three members of the Cantors Assembly, were all former choir members of mine. Martin Leubitz and Fredda Rakusin Mendelson were also born and raised in the congregation I serve. If that kind of talent can be found in Akron, Ohio, imagine the possibilities in larger congregations and communities. Find these young men and women, arouse their interest, encourage them and point them in the direction of 3080 Broadway.

Many of our colleagues have expressed an interest in continuing education, particularly our younger members. My hope is to establish regional days of study and, with Henry's assistance, to use faculty members from the Cantorial School as instructors. Additionally, there are exciting opportunities to be explored through the Internet. With the assistance of Henrique Bass and Sheldon Levin, that process has begun.

A new area, which we will now establish, and which was brought to my attention by Saul Hammerman, is the creation of a Retirement Committee to deal with issues of concern to our retirees, as well as those preparing to bring their pulpit careers to a close. In a sense, we are all planning for retirement. The years pass by all too quickly. This committee will guide you in considering questions such as, "What is fair and reasonable to ask of a congregation, upon retirement, which one has served for most of his/her career?" Retirement is clearly an area to which we need to devote greater attention.

Abe Shapiro will be duly recognized later this evening but, allow me to thank him again, on behalf of all of us, for efforts above and beyond the call of duty since Sam's passing. Nate, Joe and Chayim: truly one would need a calculator to determine how many hours you have devoted to this Jubilee celebration during the past year. You were committed to making certain that this milestone event in the history of our organization was marked in a manner fitting the prestige of the Cantorate. Let us all join together in a standing ovation for Abe, Nate, Joe and Chayim for their collective efforts during the past year.

The unsung heroes of each convention are the members of the Management Committee. They deny themselves the opportunity to fully participate and enjoy the convention to make the experience more pleasurable and inspiring for the rest of us. It is an act of complete unselfishness. This year their task was more difficult than ever before, but, once again, they did an incredible job. Please join me in a round of applause for our Management Committee, as well.

As I bring my remarks to a close, I would like to share two final thoughts. It is said that no one is irreplaceable. I beg to differ. For us, there will never be another Sam Rosenbaum. I do not believe that any single individual can possibly replace Sam. Together, however, we can and will continue to bring honor to the Cantors Assembly and to Sam's memory by carrying on his good deeds.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, let us remember that each of us is an equal partner in the Cantors Assembly. This organization belongs to all of us. The fact that a *Hazzan* serving a 500-family congregation in Akron, Ohio can become Executive Vice

## **Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998** ---

President is proof that leadership opportunities within the Assembly are open to any colleague with the talent, time, desire and dedication. May we move forward, together, from strength to strength.



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## Memorial to Departed Colleagues

### Hazzan Richard Walberg

Thus wrote the classic Hebrew poet, Hayim Nahman Bialik:

*After my death, thus shall you mourn for me?  
There was a man, and behold, he is no more  
Before his time this man died  
And the song of his life was interrupted in the middle;  
And how tragic! He had one more song –  
And now the song, too, is lost forever.*

It is with heavy hearts, deep sadness and fond affection that we recall the memories of seven colleagues who have passed on just this last year. Nevertheless we can take consolation in the knowledge that the waves of their sound are still reverberating; echoing in the minds and hearts of the thousands in whom they instilled a love for the chant and soul of our people. Their song will never end. The heritage they left to us all will last forever. As we remember them here on earth, they have ascended before the throne of the almighty as *shelichei tsibbur* pleading the cause of their people and all people everywhere. May their souls be bound up in the bonds of life and may their memories be for a blessing.

#### We Remember **Hazzan Saul Bash**

Saul had a very rich and long career. Born in Brooklyn, he attended various Yeshivot and received a Bachelor's degree in 1934 from Brooklyn College. Saul was privileged to have studied with Eliyahu Schnipelisky, Joshua Lind, Jacob Rappaport and Herman Zalis. He also studied at the Teachers Institute of Yeshiva University and received a Master's degree from the Ferkauf School of Education at Yeshiva University. Saul was active as a composer and was known for his jovial personality. For forty years he was the cantor at the Flatbush Jewish Center in Brooklyn, New York. Quietly and gently he served the spiritual needs of his congregants with great dignity, warmth and care.

#### We Remember **Hazzan Harold Brindell**

Harold Brindell possessed a magnificent tenor voice. In addition to being a fine *Hazzan*, he was sought after as a well-known oratorio and opera singer. Harold attended the Chicago Music College and the College of Jewish Studies. He also studied with Todros Greenberg and Moses Silverman. Harold Brindell served West Suburban Temple Har Zion in River Forest, Illinois with dignity for 46 years. He was a true friend and genuinely respected by his colleagues. Harold was totally dedicated to his profession and the preservation of its highest standards. He will be sorely missed by those who knew him and loved him.

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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### We Remember *Hazzan Moshe Ganchoff*

Moshe Ganchoff is considered by many to be the greatest exponent of classical Eastern European Hazzanut of the half-century. As a child he sang in synagogue choirs with Cantor Simon Zemachson. In 1928, Ganchoff assumed his first yearly position as Cantor, serving the Hunts Point Jewish Center in the Bronx. He went on later in rapid succession serving various congregations in the Brooklyn area. Following the passing of David Roitman in 1944, Ganchoff was named *Hazzan* of Congregation Shaare Zedek, the third oldest congregation in New York City, where he served until 1957. Subsequently Ganchoff journeyed on concert tours throughout the world and at the invitation of the State of Israel he was a featured guest artist at the Israel Music Festival. Through his prolific recordings and a weekly radio program for over a quarter- century Ganchoff became known as a master of improvisation, acclaimed by his colleagues as the “Master of a Master’s Art.” Ganchoff served on the faculty of the Hebrew Union College – School of Sacred Music from 1950 to 1972. He was one of the last of the Golden Age and certainly influenced many *Hazzanim* here today. Moshe Ganchoff has left us a legacy of memories and melodies that have enriched us and remain forever emblazoned in our hearts and will never be erased from our minds. We shall never forget him. We shall all miss him.

### We Remember *Hazzan Philip Moddel*

Born in Germany, Philip studied at the University of Frankfurt, The Yeshiva, and Hoch’s Conservatorium of Music in Frankfurt where he received a Doctorate in Music and Fine Arts. He wrote a biography of Max Helfman and was himself a prolific composer and meticulous arranger. After leaving Germany in 1938 he emigrated to London and later was offered a position as choirmaster and *Hazzan* in Dublin, Ireland, a post he held for 19 years. In 1957 Philip Moddel came to the United States to occupy the position as Cantor, Music Director and full-time teacher at Temple Beth Emet in Anaheim, California until his retirement. He was one of the founders of the “Zimriya,” Israel’s Biennial Choir Festival and was also the recipient of the Solomon Schechter Award for Music, both nationally and of the West Coast region. Philip Moddel will certainly be remembered for having exemplified the dignity of the Cantorate.

### We Remember *Hazzan Marvin Savitt*

Marvin Retired in 1989 after serving Westbury Hebrew Congregation for 30 years. He received his education at N.Y. College of Music where he went on to Temple Emanuel of Parkchester for nine years. Marvin served in the Armed Forces for more than 3 years and had the privilege and good fortune of playing in Irving Berlin’s show and movie, “This is the Army”. Marvin Savitt was thought of very highly by his congregation and was truly faithful to the musical tradition of our people.



### We Remember *Hazzan* Sol Wechsler

Sol Wechsler was born in Poland and came to the United States when just a child. He received a Law degree from St. John's Law School in Brooklyn in 1936. He attended the Jewish Teacher's Seminary and was fortunate enough to study with Herman Zalis, Joshua Weisser, and Joshua Lind. Sol had a rich and varied career serving Ahavath Israel in Brooklyn, Inwood Hebrew Congregation in Manhattan, Beth El Ner Tamid in Milwaukee and Beth El Congregation in Norfolk until his retirement. He leaves many fond memories for those whose lives he touched.

### We Remember *Hazzan* Joseph Wieselman

Joseph influenced many lives. He retired from Temple Beth El, Poughkeepsie, New York in 1990 after 23 years of devoted service. He received degrees from City College New York, New York University and Teachers Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary. He proudly served our country in the Air Force during World War II for more than three years. Joseph possessed a wonderful sense of humor, and his wife Kathy recalls his use of humor during his illness right until his death. Through the example of his life he imparted the high values of courage, hope and optimism to those he left behind.

We recall the words of Bialik quoted at the outset but with a slight paraphrasing:

*After their death, thus we will mourn for them.  
There were seven men, and behold, they are no more,  
Summoned from on high they returned to their Creator.  
The notes of their song remained here on earth while its  
Melody accompanied them to their eternal home.  
How comforting that every song they gave us will live  
Forever in the human heart;  
Because they were indeed sweet singers of Israel."*

## Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Jubilee Celebration – June, 1998

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We record with special sorrow, the names of the following colleagues who have passed away this year:

**Saul Bash, Harold Brindell, Moshe Ganchoff, Philip Moddel,  
Marvin Savitt, Sol Wechsler, Joseph Wieselman**

### **Memorial Roll of Departed Colleagues**

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Isadore Adelsman	Moshe Ganchoff
Martin Adolf	Frederick Gartner
Bernard Alt	Norman Geller
Joseph Amdur	Marcus Gerlich
Irving Ashery	William Belskin-Ginsburg
Gedaliah Bargad	Leib Glantz
Jacob Barkin	Myro Glass
Saul Bash	Leon Gold
Leon Bennett	Maurice Goldberg
Akiba Bernstein	Eugene Goldberger
Eliezer Bernstein	Judah Goldring
Sigmund Blass	Jacob Goldstein
Saul H. Breeh	Jacob Gowseiw
Harold Brindell	Todos Greenberg
Harry Brockman	Morris Greenfield
David Brodsky	Charles Gudovitz
William H. Caesar	Isaiah Guterman
Barry Caplan	Nathaniel Halevy
Paul Carus	Herman Hammerman
David Chasman	Michal Hammerman
Jordan Cohen	Henry Hearst
Tevile Cohen	Mordecai Heiser
Joseph Cysner	Gabriel Hochberg
Simon Domowitz	William Hofstader
Samuel Dubrow	Jacob Hohenemser
Leopold Edelstein	Eugene Holzer
Aaron Edgar	William S. Horn
Gershon Ephros	Aaron Horowitz
Ruben Erlbaum	Israel Horowitz
Max Feder	David Jacob
Nico Feldman	Victor Jacoby
Irving Feller	Eli Kagan
Nicholas Fenakel	Abraham Kantor
Felix Fogelman	Abraham Kaplan
Charles Freedland	Adolph Katchko
Milton Freedman	Herman Kinnory
Harry Freilich	Saul Kirschenbaum
Uri Frenkel	Irving Kischel
Henry Fried	Jacob Kleinberg
Abraham Friedmann	Ben Klonsky
Israel Fuchs	Arthur S. Koret
	Jacob Kurland
	David Kusevitsky



Joseph Lengyel  
Morris Levinson  
Charles Lew  
Joshua Lind  
Murray Lind  
Sigmund Lipp  
Morris Lowy  
**Yehudah Leyb Mandel**  
Asher Mandelblatt  
Aaron Mann  
David Mann  
Joseph Mann  
Fred Mannes  
Philip Marantz  
Gerson S. Margolis  
Morris Markowitz  
Abraham Marton  
Leon H. Masovetsky  
Bernard Matlin  
Saul Meisels  
Nathan Mendelson  
Allen Michelson  
Edgar Mills  
Philip Moddel  
Samuel Morginstin  
Abraham Naimark  
Moshe Nathanson  
Paul Niederland  
Ben G. Nosowsky  
Morris Okun  
Elija Olkon  
Norman Perman  
Sherwood Plitnick  
Samuel Postolow  
Dov Propis  
David J. Putterman  
Abraham Rabinowitz  
Abraham Reisman  
Yaakov Y. Renzer  
Tevele Ring  
Moses Rontal  
Abraham S. Rosen  
Louis Rosen  
Yechiel Rosen  
Samuel Rosenbaum  
Ephraim Rosenberg  
Moshe Rosenfeld  
Louis Rothman  
Chaim P. Rothstein  
William Rubin  
Arthur A. Sachs  
Sol Sanders  
William Sauler  
Marvin Savitt  
Sidney Scharff  
Itzik Schiff  
Morris Schorr  
Alvin F. Schraeter  
Arnold Schraeter  
Joseph A. Schroeder  
Jacob Schwartz  
Joseph Schwartzman  
Robert Segal  
Samuel Seidelman  
Abraham Shapiro  
Ruben Sherer  
David I. Silverman  
Moses J. Silverman  
Jacob Sivan  
Hyman Sky  
Jacob Sonenklar  
Nathaniel Sprinzen  
Mendel Stawis  
Joshua O. Steele  
Charles Sudock  
Israel Tabatsky  
Isaac Trager  
Julius Ulman  
Carl Urstein  
Shmuel Vigoda  
Henry Wahrman  
Jacob Wahrman  
Sol Wechsler  
Harry Weinberg  
Joseph Wieselman  
Abba Yosef Weisgal  
Solomon Winter  
Max Wohlberg  
Arthur Yolkoff  
Herbert Zaiman  
Israel Zuckerberg

ההספַר: Hazzan Richard Wolberg

הזמרת: Hazzan Emanuel Perlman

*Editor's Note:*

The contributions in this volume have been edited from audio tape recordings. Since there are always differences between spoken and written language, this printed version will occasionally differ very slightly from what was actually said. Every effort was made to ensure that this edited version conveys the speakers' intentions.

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